MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS IN CONFLICT: A LONGITUDINAL EXAMINATION OF EUROPEAN AMERICAN, AFRICAN AMERICAN, AND LATINA MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS DURING THE TRANSITION TO PUBERTY

By

SARA VILLANUEVA ABRAHAM

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By

Sara Villanueva Abraham

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This study examines how mother-daughter relationships and conflict specifically develop over a 3-year period. The sample included African American, European American, and Latina girls and mothers. Mothers and daughters reported on conflict frequency and intensity, and children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Mothers reported on parenting behaviors and beliefs. Videotaped interactions were coded to assess respect, communication, and relationship quality. Conflict did not increase over time, nor did it vary by ethnicity across time. Respect was differentially salient to dyads of differing ethnicities, with mother-reported conflict intensity and respect moderated by ethnicity at both time points. Although African American and Latina mothers reported significantly higher levels of disciplinary behaviors at both assessments, mothers and daughters from all ethnicities reported positive, nurturant relationships. Neither pubertal status nor timing directly predicted conflict, but timing and conflict were moderated by

ethnicity. Finally, conflict during late-childhood was associated with adolescent adjustment during early adolescence.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Tremendous efforts have been put forth to investigate both the quality and transformations of parent-child relationships during adolescence. Research in this field has shown repeatedly that the period of early adolescence is often a time of increased emotional and physical distancing from parents (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Holmbeck, 1996; Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991; Steinberg, 1989), as well as a time in which disagreements, minor conflicts, and emotional tensions are more frequently experienced by parents and their adolescent children (for reviews, see Holmbeck, 1996; Laursen & Collins, 1994; Laursen, Coy, & Collins, 1998; Steinberg, 1990; Steinberg & Silk, 2002). Examinations of conflict with parents before, during, and after adolescence indicate that conflict and age are related in an inverted U-shaped function, such that conflict increases during early adolescence, is reasonably stable during middle adolescence, and declines when the adolescent moves away from home (Montemayor, 1983). Conflicts during early adolescence have been reported to occur fairly frequently, with adolescents reporting an average of seven disagreements per day (Laursen, 1989) but are not typically intense, volatile, or indicative of major problems. In fact, despite fairly frequent conflict at this age period, only a very small minority (5%-10%) of all families with adolescents experience serious problems or a marked deterioration in parent-child relationships (Steinberg, 1990). Moreover, research has consistently indicated that conflicts between parents and adolescents rarely occur over critical topics

such as religion, politics, sex, or drugs; rather, these conflicts occur over everyday family issues such as schoolwork, chores, and getting along with siblings (Collins & Russell, 1991; Smetana, 1988). In sum, although repetitive bickering between parents and adolescents becomes an issue that is somewhat disruptive in their daily lives, research suggests that the result is usually a strong, healthy parent-child relationship that continues to develop as they move beyond the period of adolescence.

Although popular notions and stereotypes of the parent-adolescent relationship as one in which there is extreme hostility, anger, and intense conflict have not been confirmed in empirical examinations of teenagers and their parents, adolescence has been shown by researchers to be a time for realignments and redefinitions within the family. It has been suggested that moderate amounts of conflict occurring within the context of a warm, caring environment can be somewhat functional in transforming the unilateral parent-child relationships of middle childhood to the more mutual relations of late adolescence and young adulthood (Holmbeck, 1996; Steinberg, 1990; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). Nonetheless, the "storm and stress" stereotypes continue to persist in the popular mainstream media. One explanation for such persistence proposed by Steinberg (2001) is that parents are more negatively affected by the frequent bickering and squabbling that takes place during this time than are adolescents, and parents are more likely to hold on to the negative affect after an interaction with their teenager. Furthermore, Steinberg suggests that the day-to-day conflicts over mundane issues that researchers have previously dismissed as unimportant were, in fact, unimportant to teenagers but were a significant source of distress for parents (Silverberg & Steinberg, 1990; Steinberg, 2001). Thus, although these mildly upsetting interactions over everyday

matters do not disrupt the long-term parent-child bond, they do seem to take a toll on parental mental health, especially among mothers (Silverberg & Steinberg, 1987).

Although some research has found that adolescents are not negatively affected by conflict with their parents, there is a limited body of research that has established a link between parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent adjustment. Hauser and his colleagues (Leaper, Hauser, Kremen, & Powers, 1989) have shown that within the context of adolescent-parent interactions, family communication patterns suggesting either closeness or separation directly influence adolescents' ego development. Moreover, Hauser has also shown that values emphasized within family environments (that is, family orientations toward independence, participation in activities, expressiveness, and achievement) are associated with adolescents' perceived competence and self-perceptions (Hauser, Jacobson, Wertlieb, & Brink, 1985). Additional studies found significant associations (a) between parental interactions and adolescent self-esteem and (b) between adolescents' difficulty establishing autonomy and relatedness in the context of family interactions and internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Allen, Hauser, Eickholt, & Bell, 1994; Isberg, Hauser, Jacobson, & Powers, 1989). Most centrally, Rueter, Scaramella, Wallace, and Conger (1999) examined the impact of parent-child conflict on internalizing symptoms and disorder. Findings from this study suggest that both internalizing symptoms and parent-child conflict in early adolescence (ages 12-13) predicted changes in internalizing symptoms over time and in reports of history of disorder by young adulthood (ages 19-20). Specifically, prior parent-child disagreement influenced internalizing disorders via their indirect effect on subclinical symptoms rather than via a direct path to a later disorder (Graber, 2004). In sum, although parent-adolescent conflict is seen as somewhat normative and benign, empirical research indicates that indeed there are

long-term effects for both parents and adolescents. Specifically, because findings concerning conflict and adolescent adjustment are mixed, further investigations into the potential developmental effects of conflict on adolescents' internalizing and externalizing behaviors are warranted. The present investigation examines these potential effects within the context of varying cultural groups.

Despite increasing interest and research efforts to investigate the nature of conflict within the parent-adolescent relationship, significant lacunas in this body of literature continue to exist. Although there is currently a growing literature on diverse families of different ethnic and economic backgrounds, and the effects of different contexts and environments on parent-child relationships (e.g., Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz, & Simons, 1994; Conger et al., 2002; Fuligni, 1998; Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002; McLoyd & Smith, 2002; Smetana & Gaines, 1999), much of the research on parent-child conflict has focused on White, middle-class, two-parent families. Recent research has shown that conflict, as well as parenting and child behaviors, may very well be differentially experienced by families that hold different cultural beliefs and are from different ethnic and economic backgrounds (Abraham, Graber, & Brooks-Gunn, 2004; Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002; Magnuson & Duncan, 2002). It would therefore be of great importance to contribute to the development of this literature and expand the scope to include much needed ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity among samples. Further discussions on the inclusion of ethnic and economically diverse samples and reviews of research conducted thus far are included in later sections.

In addition to limitations in cross-cultural work, Blok et al. (1988) and others have noted that the bulk of adolescent research enroll subjects who are already in the developmental period of adolescence. The nature of family relationships prior to

adolescence, however, is important as it allows researchers to examine how families navigate challenges and changes within the child and within the family across time. Thus, before the effects of individual and family development during adolescence can be confirmed, researchers must first understand conditions prior to adolescence. Few studies have assessed conflict prior to adolescence to determine whether conflict in late-childhood differs from conflict in early adolescence; nor have very many studies investigated parent-child conflict longitudinally. Therefore, the current investigation will investigate changes in behaviors and interactions between mothers and daughters as children develop from the late childhood period into adolescence.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Developmental Changes in Parent-Child Relationships and Conflict

Research on the nature of conflict within parent-child relationships has traditionally focused on two developmental periods, early childhood and early adolescence. One body of literature suggests that conflict between parents and children may be an important arena for children's socialization (Dunn & Slomkowski, 1992). In fact, research on parent-child conflict across the toddler and early preschool years is well documented (Dunn, 1988; Dunn & Munn, 1985) with one report suggesting that parents with young children experience conflict with their child on average between 3.5 to 15 times per hour (Dix, 1991). Similarly, as previously noted, investigations concerning parent-adolescent relationships have repeatedly shown that the early adolescent period is often a time of increased emotional and physical distancing from parents, as well as a time in which the frequency and affective intensity of conflicts between parents and adolescents is higher than at other ages. As Montemayor (1983) points out, however, in attempts to answer the question of whether conflict with parents increases around the time that adolescents enter puberty, examinations of conflict with parents before, during, and after adolescence have yielded mixed results. Two likely explanations have been offered, one of which is that researchers are inconsistent in the methodologies and definitions used in studying conflict between parents and their children. Another likely reason for inconsistent findings in this field is that children under 12 years of age have

generally not been included in these investigations, thus making it difficult to assess the true rate of prepubescent conflict. To address this issue, the current investigation examines parent-child conflict among a diverse sample of girls at two different developmental time points. In order to understand more fully conflict during adolescence, an examination of children's social environments, their relationships with their parents, and the developmental sequelae they encounter must first be addressed.

Middle Childhood

The transition from elementary to junior high or middle school introduces children to a world in which a broad array of social networks begins to develop. Six- to 12-year-olds experience a rapidly widening social world (Collins, Harris, & Susman, 1995) that incorporates parents, extrafamilial adults, and peers. During infancy and early childhood, families are the primary contexts for children's social exchanges with others. When children reach middle childhood, however, less time is spent in the company of adults and family members, relative to peers and adults outside of the family (Collins et al., 1995; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984). Classrooms, playgrounds, and school buses are now additional settings in which peer interactions and greater opportunities for more diverse interactions occur (Hartup & Laursen, 1993). It is during middle childhood that children's descriptions of themselves become more stable and more comprehensive (Damon & Hart, 1988). Moreover, during this developmental period, children also begin to develop self-control and self-regulation skills as well as awareness of social expectations and social responsibilities. It is these skills that ultimately lay the groundwork for expectations of greater autonomy and independence in adolescence.

Parenting during middle-childhood presents different challenges than when children were younger. For parents, the experiences their children are now having outside

the family environment often create additional concerns when faced with the responsibility of monitoring their children's activities and choice of companions from a distance (Collins et al., 1995). Parents must face the fact that in comparison to early childhood, their children now encounter more risks such as increases in exposure to tobacco, alcohol, drugs, school violence, among others (Shonkoff, 1994). In response to children's developing self-regulatory skills and growing desire for independence, parents gradually begin to allow them more freedom and responsibilities. Parents perceive this to be a difficult and strenuous task (Collins et al., 1995). Parenting during this developmental period involves more challenging and certainly more complex circumstances that contribute to normative, developmental changes in the parent-child relationship itself.

Normative Changes in Parent-Child Relationships

Interactions and Affective Expression

Interactions between children and their parents become less frequent in middle childhood. As stated earlier, children spend less time with parents during this period, a pattern that continues into adolescence. The reasons behind this are two-fold. First, because the child is now socially engaging in more activities with peers and shifting his/her interests accordingly, decreasing time and lack of common interests lead to fewer interactions between children and parents. Second, Stafford and Hill (1989) have shown that parents are with their children less than half as much as before the beginning of school and that this decline in time together is relatively greater for parents with lower levels of education. The implication is that parents, especially once children start school, are also actively spending more time away from family and more time at work. Presumably, parents with lower levels of education earn lower incomes, and thus have to

work more hours to make the income necessary to maintain financial responsibilities, ultimately resulting in less time spent with their children.

Overt displays of affection by both parents and children also become less frequent during middle childhood. For most children, receiving hugs and kisses, especially in the context of social environments such as school where peers are present, leads to feelings of embarrassment and fear of being ridiculed by others. Parents may respond to the child's feelings by altering their expression of emotion. Collins and colleagues (1995) argue that displays of warmth less often involve physical expressions of affection as children mature. However, longitudinal data show that despite a decrease in displays of physical affection between the ages of 3 and 12, parents report little change in their enjoyment of parenting, or having positive regard for their child (Roberts, Block, & Block, 1984).

Mutual Cognition

The ways in which parents and children think about each other and the expectations that they may hold regarding the other's behavior begin to change during middle childhood. Although some research (Smetana, 1989) has indicated that there is relative congruity in the perceptions of 10- and 11-year-olds and their parents concerning matters in which parents' authority is legitimate, other research (Alessandri & Wozniak, 1987) found that 10- to 11-year-olds perceive their parents' beliefs about them to be less accurate than do older adolescents. Thus, it seems likely that the cognitive incongruities between children's and parent's attributions that are much more likely to occur during adolescence are beginning to appear during middle to late childhood.

The Mother-Adolescent Relationship

Mothers tend to bear the brunt of conflicts with their children. Reviews examining adolescent-parent relationships indicate that teenagers have very different relationships with their mothers than with fathers (Collins & Russell, 1991; Holmbeck, 1996). Mothers spend more time with their teenagers than fathers do, with most of this time being spent on one-on-one interactions, talking about problems or emotions, and general caregiving and emotional closeness. It is this closeness along with the time that mothers spend with their teens that some researchers suggest instigates adolescents' push for independence and autonomy. Because mothers want to maintain this closeness, and adolescents have a growing desire to increase their sense of autonomy, greater conflicts between mothers and adolescents ensue (Collins & Russell, 1991). Other researchers (Steinberg, 1989) have suggested that particularly among mothers and their adolescent daughters, increases in conflict are directly associated with pubertal maturation. This assertion, based on evolutionary theory, suggests that pubertal maturation among adolescents may be inhibited by maternal closeness, thus making maternal distance or conflict a necessary step toward healthy development. Nonetheless, research has consistently shown that conflicts tend to occur between adolescent girls and their mothers more often than among other familial and nonfamilial dyads (Collins & Laursen, 1992; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Laursen, 1989). Hence, although conflict between parents and their children does not seem to threaten the sanctity of the relationship, it does indeed become an issue that is pervasive in their daily lives.

Theoretical Models of Parent-child Conflict During Adolescence

A great deal of research has been conducted over a span of many years to investigate the sources of perturbation in the family during adolescence. Several

theoretical models have been proposed to address the issue of parent-adolescent conflict (for reviews, see Laursen & Collins, 1994; Steinberg, 1990; 2001). The following section reviews both historical and contemporary theories of adolescents' relational development with their parents, underscoring the role of conflict within each.

Psychoanalytic Models

Psychoanalytic theorists studying parents and adolescents promote the notion that conflict and detachment, not harmony and attachment, characterize normal family life during this period of development. According to this view, children experience psychological and behavioral realignments that result from physiological maturation. These physiological changes awaken Oedipal desires, which in turn produce intrapsychic conflict between the id and the superego during the adolescent years (Laursen & Collins, 1994). Thus, libidinal urges overwhelm adolescents and consequently erupt into conflict with parents, providing a normative pathway by which to realign the relationship and reduce anxieties. According to this view, in order to cope, adolescents detach themselves from the family context in response to the initial conflict, and replace close parental ties with peer relationships, subsequently evoking more conflict. The biological changes of puberty and their sexual sequelae trigger the process of detachment, which is characterized by intrafamilial conflict. Thus, adolescent rebellion and detachment are viewed within this theoretical framework as both an inevitable and normative response to a second Oedipal event (Steinberg, 1990). In fact, psychoanalytic theorists promote the idea that parents should expect opposition and defiance. Furthermore, lack of such conflict with their teen should cause concern, as lack of defiance and conflict and existence of parent-adolescent harmony is considered to be indicative of stunted development. Moreover, psychoanalytic perspectives maintain that detachment abruptly

terminates the latency or preadolescent period, whereby, in response to the resurgence of latent sexual drives, the formerly obedient young adolescent "regresses" to a more psychologically primitive state that turns spiteful, oppositional, and unpredictable (Steinberg, 1990). Proponents of the psychoanalytic perspective agree that parent-child conflict peaks with the onset of pubertal maturation and declines as peers become the focus of sexual attraction.

Neoanalytic Revisions

As Steinberg (1990) points out, conventional analytic views of the detachment process have given way to more tempered neoanalytic theories that emphasize the process of adolescent individuation rather than detachment from parents. According to Blos (1979), the process of individuation occurs as the young adolescent develops a clearer sense of self, psychologically separate from her parents. This theoretical perspective generally minimizes the behavioral storminess associated with detachment, and instead emphasizes the more peaceful process through which the adolescent develops a new view of herself and her parents. Although the repudiation of parents remains a common goal, compared to the preceding psychoanalytic perspective, the individuation process is much more cognitive than behavioral, whereby successful individuation is not necessarily accompanied by overt rebellion, opposition or conflict (Steinberg, 1990).

Sociobiological Models

Sociobiological models share similar ideas of abrupt change in adolescents' behaviors and changes in parent-child relationships, all triggered by biological maturation. One important difference is that sociobiological models emphasize human evolutionary history and incorporate it into explanations of conflict. Rooted primarily in Hall's (1904) storm and stress model, recent sociobiological models propose that conflict

between young adolescents and their parents around the time of puberty has an evolved basis, and that this pattern of relations is an atavism that at one time in our evolutionary history served to increase reproductive fitness (Steinberg 1989; 1990). According to this view, the repetitive quarreling and bickering that is characteristic of parent-adolescent relationships serves an important purpose in the adolescent's development. Steinberg (1989) suggests that conflict with parents is heightened at puberty, which leads to adolescents spending more time with peers and possible mates, therefore enhancing the chance for reproduction and survival. Moreover, these evolutionary perspectives suggest that although the proximal cause of parent-adolescent conflict may be disagreements over everyday issues, the ultimate cause of conflict between parents and adolescents is the need to distance teens from their parents, so that mating will take place outside the family group (Steinberg, 1989). In sum, this theoretical perspective postulates that similar to studies conducted on non-human primates, conflict among parents and adolescents becomes greater when social conditions dictate long periods of contact between sexually maturing adolescents and their parents and impede adolescent emigration from the family context. Thus, once distance from the family is achieved, conflicts between parents and adolescents subside.

Puberty Models

Models that emphasize physical maturation as the catalyst in the increased conflict between parents and adolescents are referred to as puberty models. A series of such models have been applied to understand associations between pubertal changes in children and characteristics of parent-child relationships (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). The first emphasizes the role of hormonal levels and their direct or indirect effects on parent-adolescent relationships. Research on the impact of pubertal hormones on

adolescent feelings suggests that variations in hormone concentration could alter adolescents' arousal or emotional lability, making responses to parent initiatives more unpredictable, thus yielding potentially more volatile parent-child interactions (Buchanan, Eccles, & Becker, 1992; Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1990; Steinberg, 1987). Specifically, increases in androgens have been associated with greater sexual motivations and depressive affect in girls (Brooks-Gunn & Warren, 1989; Paikoff, Brooks-Gunn, & Warren, 1991; Udry, 1988). Thus, while not as extreme and widespread as popular accounts would have one believe, increase in negative emotions does seem to occur with the onset of puberty (i.e., between late childhood and early adolescence, Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, 1990; Graber, 2003). This increase in negative emotions can clearly have an effect on children's social interaction with parents. Therefore, as Paikoff and colleagues (1991) note, there is a substantial amount of evidence to suggest that hormonal changes at puberty may indirectly influence adolescents' interactions with their parents through negative affect.

A second pubertal model concerns the association between pubertal hormones and parent and adolescent behavior through the creation of secondary sex characteristics. In addition to hormonal effects on adolescent behaviors, overt physical maturation experienced by adolescents at puberty can be interpreted as social cues or stimuli that evoke different behaviors from parents or peers. The incipient reproductive and social maturity of the child becomes salient to both adolescent and parent as an event laden with social meaning and differential expectations (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). Puberty is seen as a social event that signals to the adolescent and others that one is visibly older, thus influencing relationships in multiple ways. As Paikoff and Brooks-Gunn (1991) point out, social-cognitive and self-definitional changes on the part of the adolescent all

contribute to the changes in the parent-child relationship for young adolescents. Furthermore, because in most families, conflict appears to peak around midpuberty, then tapers off, support for the role of puberty in the increase of parent-adolescent conflict is suggested.

Pubertal timing refers to when one goes through puberty in comparison to same age peers or age norms and may play a particularly important role in adolescent development; it remains understudied at the early phases of puberty, especially among non-European girls. According to the "early maturation" or "stage-termination" hypothesis (Petersen & Taylor, 1980), early pubertal development is a risk factor for problem behaviors for girls across a range of outcomes (Brooks-Gunn, Petersen, & Eichorn, 1985; Caspi & Moffitt, 1991). The disadvantage for early maturers may be that they experience social pressure to adopt more adult norms and engage in more adult-like behaviors, despite the possibility of not being socially, emotionally, or cognitively prepared. Further, early maturing girls may be seen as "deviant" compared to their peers according to the "off-time" hypothesis. Within the context of familial disagreements, research has shown that early maturers have longer periods of conflict and are less likely to show declines in conflict over time (Steinberg, 1989). Moreover, Graber and colleagues (Graber, Lewinsohn, Seeley, & Brooks-Gunn, 1997; Graber, Seeley, Brooks-Gunn, & Lewinsohn, 2004) found that problems in relationships are a part of psychopathology for early maturing girls.

Social Relational Models

Unlike the previously discussed theories of adolescent conflict, social relational models emphasize continuity (versus discontinuity) that results from the inherent stability of close relationships (Laursen & Collins, 1994). According to this theory, the degree to

which conflict exists for adolescents varies as a function of the particular relationship in which the conflict arises and the setting or context in which it takes place. Dyads marked by the interdependence characteristic of relationship closeness have been found to show higher rates of conflict than less interdependent pairs (Hartup & Laursen, 1999). As such, conflicts are presumed to be more common with parents and other family members. Collins and Laursen (1992) argue that parent-child bonds represent *closed-field relationships*, which cannot easily be disrupted and are in part defined and constrained by kinship and legal definitions and associated norms and environmental pressures (Berscheid, 1985). According to Collins and colleagues, these types of relationships involve long interaction histories and closely followed interactional scripts. Outside the family, adolescents participate in *open-field relationships* (with peers) which are voluntary, more fluid, and can be dissolved without the biological or legal constraints associated with closed-field relationships.

When involved in peer or open-field relationships, because the relationship is not bound by familial ties, adolescents tend to minimize conflict so as to avoid disruption of the relationship and seek to maintain the relationship. By contrast, when adolescents engage in conflict within a familial, and more specifically, parent-adolescent relationship, these precautions are not deemed necessary to preserve family bonds. Thus, because the relationships are close and more interdependent, parents and children, especially mothers and daughters, are expected to experience more conflict.

Cognitive Developmental Models

Discontinuity caused by intellectual, cognitive development is seen as the source of conflict within cognitive developmental models. The physical and social maturation that occurs in adolescence activates a change in the child's understanding of the self,

others, and the roles that are played within relationships (Laursen & Collins, 1994). According to this view, as children develop, they form new perspectives about their roles and the roles of their parents which, in turn, change attitudes and behavior toward parents. This process oftentimes leads to more conflict, as adolescents question roles, behaviors, and expectations.

Work by both Collins (1990) and Smetana (1988) has shown that not only do adolescents become more aware of the roles to be played, they also become cognitively prepared to judge others' actions such as parents' behavioral inconsistencies. Collins has argued that certain aspects of parent-adolescent conflicts can be understood when one considers how interactions between family members violate their behavioral expectations of each other (Steinberg, 2001). Further, according to Smetana, and more generally to these models, adolescents are now more cognitively able to judge issues over which conflict is occurring as falling within their own personal jurisdiction, whereas parents continue to view issues from a social conventions scope that is based on moral codes. Indeed, Smetana's work has shown that many of the conflicts in which parents and their teenagers are involved reflect not only differences of opinion but differences in the way issues are framed and defined. Thus, this apparent discrepancy serves to create more conflict among parents and children as children continue to develop.

Like many prior studies concerning the development of parent-child relationships, the current investigation uses the cognitive-developmental model as a basis from which to explain parent-child conflict. Because several researchers have suggested that changes in parent-child relationships that occur between late childhood and early adolescence are instigated by children's growing desire to increase their sense of autonomy and independence, this theoretical perspective is of particular salience.

To summarize, although not typically associated with deteriorations in parent-child relationships, conflict in early adolescence has been shown, in some investigations, to increase from the period of late childhood into early adolescence. Conflict occurs more frequently in the context of the mother-daughter relationship, with mothers feeling the residual emotional consequences associated with conflict for longer periods of time. Although it has been suggested that parent-child conflict during adolescence may be functional in nature, conflict between adolescents and their parents becomes an issue that may be pervasive and disturbing for both mothers and adolescence, although findings regarding adolescent adjustment outcomes are mixed. Because mothers and daughters typically experience close, interdependent relationships, in which both parties are rewarded and invested, and because expectations and perspectives are continually changing during this period, this dyad is particularly prone to increased conflict when attempts to integrate individual goals and behaviors (while maintaining the close relationship) are put forth.

Lacunas in this body of literature include the consideration of parent-adolescent conflict within a variety of different contexts. Although an increasing body of research exists specifically to address this issue, further work is warranted to specifically investigate conflict in the context of differing cultural beliefs, ethnic and economic backgrounds, and possible moderating influences on the associations involving conflict and overall adolescent well-being.

Conflict in Context

Few investigations have examined the mother-daughter dyad in different cultural contexts, and more broadly parent-child conflict among families of differing ethnicities. It has often been suggested that preexisting behaviors and contextual factors, such as

family relationships and environmental settings, are important in understanding individual differences among adolescents and are salient to identifying who may be at risk for difficulties during adolescence (Graber & Brooks-Gunn, 1996). Despite the more refined perspectives recently acknowledging minimal diversity among samples, meta-analyses of parent-adolescent conflict show that in nearly all studies included the majority of participants were European American; several studies involved non-North American (primarily European) samples; and the remaining studies lacked enough information to classify the samples according to ethnicity (Laursen, Coy, & Collins, 1998). In addition to the dearth of studies involving adolescents of varying ethnic and economic backgrounds, numerous researchers have noted that research that does include minority families has focused primarily on deficits such as families living in poverty (McLoyd, 1990; 1998) and poor parenting practices (Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002).

The following sections will include discussions of the cultural practices, traditions, and values that are unique to African American and Latino families; an overview of what is known about families from different backgrounds in terms of differences in and expectations about conflict; and an examination of maternal (parenting practices) and child (pubertal development) characteristics and how they have been shown to differ by ethnicity.

The Culture of African American Families

Historically, to cope with enslavement and its aftermath, African American families have felt the importance of maintaining communal family traditions which remain sources of strength today (McAdoo, 2002). Among the cultural legacies that are shared and valued by African American families are the communal traditions of shared childcare, spirituality, and coresidential extended families. The extended family, rather

than the nuclear family, represents a close-knit system that serves as both security and identity for the individuals within it (McDermott, 2001). Broader kinship networks consisting of relatives and nonrelatives are the norm for African American families. These networks serve as a source of strength, trust, resilience, and survival for a culture that believes that group effort for the common interest remains an important enduring value (Garcia-Coll, Meyer, & Brillon, 1995). Within the African American culture family interdependence is encouraged, thus providing the opportunity for more family loyalty, reliance, and cohesion.

The central issues that face many African American parents are the lack of adequate financial resources, with nearly one fourth of African American children living in persistent poverty (Magnuson & Duncan, 2002); the roles of education, with many African American children attending inferior inner city schools and parents placing very high values on educational attainment; the high proportion of single parents, with two thirds of African American babies born to unmarried mothers; living with grandparents as the primary parent, with a greater tendency for African American grandparents to assume more childcare and possibly take over for the parents (George & Dickerson, 1995); and most importantly, the task of racially socializing their children. African American families feel that important socializing goals are to foster a sense of ethnic pride in their children, provide awareness of racial barriers, and pass on important information related to their cultural heritage and traditions (Park & Buriel, 1998). Moreover, because in the United States poverty is not evenly distributed among ethnic or racial groups with higher percentages of African American and Latino families in poverty, parents in such circumstances resort to restrictive disciplinary behaviors (generally viewed as harsh) to ensure their children's safety from unsafe neighborhoods

and the like (Cauce, Hiraga, Graves & Gonzales, 1996; Magnuson & Duncan, 2002; Park & Buriel, 1998). Thus, stricter disciplinary practices often seen in minority families could very well be a reflection of socio-demographic factors.

Within African American families, an extremely high value is placed on respecting, obeying, and learning from elders in the kinship network and community (Willis, 1992). In fact, learning of obedience and respect for elders is seen by African American families as the child's earliest contribution to family maintenance and cohesiveness. Depending on the social and economic environments, children's failure to respect and obey elders can have serious consequences. As such, these expectations are clearly communicated by parents to their children at a very young age. Parents within the African American culture hope to instill in their children the values that have been reinforced in their lives through family, community, and church. These values are hard work, respect for family and community, and faith in God (McDermott, 2001). Results from a recent study by Smetana & Gaines (1999) confirm these premises. Their results indicate that African American parents discuss conflicts with their adolescents in terms of respect for parents, obedience to authority, and the importance of cultural traditions. It is on the issue of respect within these varying cultures that the present study will be focused.

The Culture of Latino Families

Latino culture has strong connections that act as common threads tying together people from various Latin American cultures such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Dominican. Enduring traditional values for Latino families typically include a deep sense of family loyalty; extended family and social support networks; and an emphasis on interpersonal relatedness, relationships, and mutual respect (Fitzpatrick & Travieso,

1980; Garcia-Coll et al., 1995; Vega, Hough, & Romero, 1983). Childrearing is seen in Latino cultures as a responsibility to be shared among parents, older siblings, extended family members and close friends (compadres). Thus, as with African American families, not only is the extended family central to the values of Latinos, but interdependence within these families is continually underscored.

Substantial empirical evidence exists showing the tendency for Latinos, when compared to European Americans, to adhere to childrearing beliefs and values which are consonant with a more interdependent or collectivistic perspective (Cauce & Rodriguez, 2000). As Vega (1990) notes, the depiction of Latinos as more family oriented than European Americans has emerged as a consistent theme in several studies. The concept of familismo as a belief system that refers to feelings of loyalty, reciprocity, and solidarity towards members of the family, as well as to the notion of the family as an extension of the self (Cortes, 1995) is one that is pervasive throughout the Latino culture. Research has shown that Latino families have larger and more cohesive social networks comprised of a higher proportion of extended family as well as close friends or compadres (Harwood, Leyendecker, Carlson, Asencio, & Miller, 2002). Moreover, studies have also shown that parents expect their children to contribute to household responsibilities at an earlier age (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993), but assert his or her own agency at a later age (Pachter & Dworkin, 1997; Savage & Gauvain, 1998; Schulze, Harwood, & Scholmerich, 2001) thus supporting the idea that Latino families place greater emphasis on interdependence (Harwood et al., 2002).

African American and Latino families have many similar characteristics. Like African Americans, Latino families have also gone through historically difficult times. They too have had to endure racism and discrimination, and they too emphasize racial

and ethnic socialization for their children. Higher rates of poverty and grandparents' involvement are also more salient in the lives of Latino families than in those of their European American counterparts. More central to the present investigation is the issue of respect. Latino parents believe that they have successfully raised their children when they see that the central cultural principles that have been passed down for generations have been instilled and are now being practiced by their emerging teens. There are very explicit expectations of children's behavior within the Latino community. In fact, a well-educated, well-raised child according to the Latino culture is generally considered to be "tranquilo, obediente, y respetuoso"—calm, obedient, and respectful toward adults (Briggs, 1986; Garcia-Coll et al., 1995; Williams & Williams, 1979). These expectations are clearly understood by children and adolescents in the Latino culture and have been exemplified in empirical work. For example, Fuligni (1998) asked adolescents of different cultural backgrounds whether they thought they should argue with their parents when they disagree. Not only did he find that non-European teenagers (Mexican and Philipino) were less willing to openly contradict their parents, but Latino adolescents specifically felt that it was inappropriate to argue with or talk back to parents. Within Latino communities and families, it is understood that both the mother and father in the family are owed respect, with the utmost respect being held for elders in the family (i.e., grandparents, great-grandparents). In general, this culture follows a hierarchical structure whereby parents' status is viewed as being high, and status of children is viewed as low (Falicov, 1996). Latino parents and children have an understanding regarding expectations of behavior and roles that are to be fulfilled. Respect for parental authority and for elders is of highest importance in this understanding.

Potential Cultural Differences in Conflict

In an effort to address these issues, Smetana and her colleagues (Smetana, Abernathy, & Harris, 2000; Smetana, Crean, & Daddis, 2002; Smetana & Gaines, 1999) have investigated parent-adolescent conflict among a homogeneous sample of middle-class African American families. These studies reveal that conflicts within these families were relatively frequent, were low in intensity, and occurred over everyday, mundane issues. Additionally, within this middle-class African American sample of adolescents and their mothers, the reported number and frequency of conflicts did not change from early to middle adolescence, but conflict intensity did vary over time with mothers reporting less intensity and adolescents reporting more intensity over time (Smetana, Daddis, & Chuang, 2003). More important to the focus of the present investigation, Smetana points out that issues such as obedience and respect for elders in African American families are seen by parents as traditional social conventions, whereas adolescents in these families primarily reason about conflicts as issues of personal jurisdiction. Moreover, Smetana found that greater parental behavioral control and better mother-adolescent communication were associated with lower levels of adolescent problem behaviors. In terms of the mother-daughter dyad, it could be the case that because African American mothers are more restrictive about the socialization of daughters and because these mothers expect greater responsibility from and offer less support and validation for their daughters than their sons, greater conflicts between mothers and daughters within this population would exist (Smetana et al., 2000; Smetana & Gaines, 1999).

Similarly, Cauce and colleagues (1996) examined conflict among African American mothers and their adolescent daughters and found that within this population,

African American mothers and daughters maintain a close, loving relationship characterized by acceptance and respect; girls and their mothers in this sample also argued over matters of family routine such as curfew and household chores; and these dyads struggle with autonomy and control, with daughters seeking more autonomy and mothers seeking to maintain control. Moreover, Cauce and colleagues concluded that the most consistent message that African American adolescent girls receive from their mothers is to be self-reliant and resourceful. Most intriguingly, the topic that was reported by both mothers and daughters to cause the most intense conflict was talking back to parents. This finding is especially relevant given the current investigation's focus on girls' respect for parental authority in the context of mother-daughter conflict. More on the issue of respect within the context of different cultural backgrounds will be discussed in the following sections.

Barber (1994) conducted a comparable study in which parents of European American, African American, and Latino adolescents reported on conflict with their teen. Barber proposed that the reasons that some families are more conflicted than others may have more to do with the personal characteristics of the participants in the conflict, or with other factors related to life circumstances, than with normative changes occurring in either parents or adolescents. Thus, the purpose of this study was to begin to build a personal and contextual profile of those individuals and families that experience higher or lower levels of conflict. Results indicate that within this sample, conflict occurred over everyday, mundane matters for families of all backgrounds, consistent with past research. In addition, as expected, results also indicate that minority families reported lower levels of conflict than European American families. Moreover, corollary findings indicate that both minority groups had substantially higher behavioral expectations of their children

than their non-minority counterparts. Thus, Barber concludes that within this sample the presence of high expectations for children's behavior is associated with lower expressed conflict.

Another line of research that has investigated parent-child conflict among different ethnic groups examined whether conflict and cohesion during adolescence vary among families having different cultural traditions regarding parental authority and individual autonomy (Fuligni, 1998). This research compared immigrant and native-born families from Mexican, Chinese, Filipino, and European backgrounds. Using adolescent self-reports, Fuligni examined their beliefs, expectations, and relationships with parents. Results from this study indicate that despite holding different beliefs about parental authority and individual autonomy, adolescents from all generations and cultural backgrounds reported similar levels of conflict and cohesion with their parents. As noted previously, results also indicate that teenagers from non-European backgrounds believed it was less acceptable to talk back to or openly contradict their parents than their European American counterparts. This finding is particularly salient to the present investigation, as examinations of child defiance are incorporated into the respect for parental authority measure in the current study. Further, Fuligni also found that although Filipino and Mexican adolescents believe it is inappropriate to argue with their parents, they still expect to receive behavioral autonomy at a fairly early age. Finally, results suggest that despite adolescent beliefs when younger, longitudinal examinations conclude that as they become older, adolescents indicated a greater willingness to openly disagree with their parents and a lower endorsement of parental authority over aspects of their personal lives. As Fuligni notes, this finding suggests that even within groups that traditionally emphasize parental authority over individual autonomy, children become

less desirous of parental authority and limitations as they progress through adolescence. In sum, although small amounts of conflict were generally reported by all adolescents, the similarity in the students' reports of conflict with their parents was a surprising finding in this study, given the ethnic and generational differences in adolescents' beliefs and expectations about their parents.

Because research on parent-child conflict comparing different ethnic groups is limited, the focus in the present investigation is to further examine mother-daughter dyadic interactions as they occur in a variety of cultural or ethnic groups. In addition, the current investigation will follow girls from the late childhood period into adolescence in order to investigate any changes in child, maternal, or dyadic behaviors that may occur over time.

Using the cognitive-developmental model as a basis from which to explain parent-child conflict, many researchers suggest that the changes in parent-child relationships that occur between late childhood and early adolescence are instigated by children's growing desire to increase their sense of autonomy and independence. According to this view, children become less satisfied with parents' authority over their personal lives as they enter adolescence (Smetana, 1988). If indeed these changes are linked to autonomy, then the quality of the parent-child relationship during the transition toward the crucial early adolescent period may have an important cultural basis (Fuligni, 1998). Compared to mainstream European American cultural traditions and expectations, cultures that do not encourage autonomy and independence could very well experience differences in the occurrence or intensity of parent-adolescent conflict. Given the cultural context in which the relationship exists, mothers and daughters in Latino and African

American cultures may have different experiences regarding conflict than European American families because of differing beliefs, values, and behavioral expectations.

Maternal Characteristics

Parenting. Variations in ideologies and goals regarding childrearing in different ethnic groups, as well as reluctant socialization strategies and family interaction patterns, have been the topic of recent considerable interest (Garcia-Coll, & Pachter, 2002; Harwood et al., 2002; McAdoo, 2002). Research has shown that there are cultural differences in parenting styles, which can have positive or negative effects on parent-child relationships. Baumrind's (1971) seminal work on the operationalization of parenting style lead to conclusions on the "normative" aspects of parenting. As a result, parental typologies and children's consequential developmental outcomes were born. According to Baumrind (1971), the authoritative parenting pattern, in which parents reason with children about problems, encourage independence, and are less likely to use physical punishment, is the pattern that results in the best developmental outcomes for children. Conversely, the authoritarian parenting pattern, in which parents are controlling, stress obedience, and use physical punishment, is the pattern that results in detrimental outcomes for children. Because most of these original findings were based on European American, middle-class samples, Baumrind (1972) subsequently conducted a comparative study examining African American and European American children, which concluded that socialization practices characterized by Black families were considered authoritarian by White standards and that these child-rearing practices may be adaptive and beneficial in these different cultural contexts. Thus, Baumrind further hypothesized that ethnic group differences in parenting patterns would emerge based on differing cultural environments and beliefs. Moreover, Darling and Steinberg (1993) propose that

rather than general parenting styles, parenting practices (behaviors) exhibited in different contexts should be considered when examining effects on children's developmental outcomes. This model suggests that the focus should be on behaviors exhibited in context, across different ethnic and cultural environments, when investigating parenting practices and patterns.

Although opinions on the effectiveness of Baumrind's typologies have been mixed and somewhat controversial, with many investigators suggesting new approaches to parenting research, the typologies have gone through many revisions and are still applied today. The last decade has seen several attempts to examine the general benefit of the authoritative parenting style with some suggesting that the positive correlates of this parenting style transcend ecological factors, therefore concluding that authoritative parenting is beneficial to all (Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, 1991); and some finding that this parenting style was effective for European American children and not as effective with children from other ethnic or cultural backgrounds (Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992). Other researchers have suggested that a limitation to the general benefit of authoritative parenting is that its meaning may differ in different cultural contexts (Chao, 1994). In general, limitations are clearly exemplified by recent research showing that certain aspects of parenting are not only distributed differently in different ethnic and minority groups, but the same parenting behaviors can be associated with positive developmental outcomes in some groups but not others (Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002).

Authoritarian parenting has been found in many studies to be more common among ethnic minorities, including African American and Latino families, while not showing associated negative child outcomes typically found with European American

children raised within the same parenting style (Jambunathan, Burts, & Pierce, 2000; Rucker, 1997). Specifically, there is growing evidence to show that while greater use of harsh discipline is associated with increased child externalizing behavior in European American children, this relationship may not hold for African American and Latino families. In fact, Wang and Phinney (1998) found that for immigrant Chinese mothers in the United States, authoritarian behaviors were positively associated with higher cognitive competence in their school children. Moreover, Rudy and Grusec (2001) demonstrated that authoritarian parenting was associated with negative cognitions and affect in cultural groups that emphasized autonomy and independence, but not in those that emphasized interdependence and respect for authority. At the same time, parenting behaviors and family beliefs and values may not be identical for all non-White families. As such, African American and Latino families are considered separately.

To summarize, parenting practices of ethnic and minority families have historically been conceptualized as those of "the other" group, which are then compared to the "standard" middle-class, European American group (Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002). Differences between groups were then interpreted in terms of deficits. Recently, the field has seen a shift away from a deficit view wherein childrearing practices of ethnic minority parents were seen as deficient and in need of intervention, to one emphasizing the resilience and adaptiveness of families under various social and economic conditions (Ceballo & McLoyd, 2002; Garcia-Coll & Pachter, 2002; Magnuson & Duncan, 2002) thus underscoring the importance of parenting practices within an ecological framework to understand why ethnic minority parents use certain strategies (or parenting behaviors) and not others.

Child Characteristics

Puberty. As noted, two aspects of puberty have been linked to parent-adolescent conflict. These are the stages of pubertal development, or pubertal status, and pubertal timing. Because conflict tends to increase with pubertal development and peaks around mid-puberty for most adolescents (see Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991, for a review), an examination of pubertal differences among girls from different backgrounds is warranted. Although research involving pubertal timing at the earlier phases of puberty, particularly among non-European girls is somewhat limited, recent studies indicate that African American girls start puberty at earlier ages than their European American counterparts (Herman-Giddens et al., 1997) and Latina girls may start somewhat earlier than European American girls (see Graber, 2003, for a review).

Specific consequences experienced by early maturing girls include internalizing problems such as depression (Graber et al., 1997; Hayward et al., 1997); general negative emotions (Hayward, Gotlib, Schraedley, & Litt, 1999); and higher levels of psychological distress (Ge, Conger, & Elder, 1996). Early maturational development in girls has also been linked as a risk factor for externalizing behaviors such as engaging in risky behaviors (i.e., delinquency, sexual behaviors) earlier and more frequently than their same age peers (Caspi & Moffitt, 1991; Flannery, Rowe, & Gulley, 1993; Magnusson, Stattin, & Allen, 1985); have higher lifetime histories of disruptive behavior disorder in high school years (Graber et al., 1997); and show earlier onset and higher levels of substance abuse behaviors and higher current and lifetime prevalence for substance abuse (Graber et al., 1997; Magnusson et al., 1985). To address the issue of whether links of puberty to behavior are comparable across families of different ethnicities, Ge and colleagues (Ge, Brody, Conger, Simons, & Murry, 2002) examined

the effects of pubertal transitions on behavior problems and its interaction with family and neighborhood circumstances. Although conflict per se was not examined, results from this study indicate that early maturing children in disadvantaged neighborhoods and/or with negative parental interactions were more likely to have externalizing problems.

Because pubertal development is salient to the issue of conflict, and because research has revealed ethnic group differences in pubertal timing, examinations of girls' pubertal development is included in the present investigation. Further, prior studies have not examined if conflict actually begins to change with the initial changes of puberty that begin in late childhood for most girls; thus, the longitudinal design of the present study will perhaps result in clearer findings regarding pubertal development and conflict.

Respect for Parental Authority

Despite the fact that cultural beliefs such as respect for parental authority are thought to be important in family relationships, the issue of respect for parental authority within families as an observed construct has rarely been examined empirically, especially within the context of parent-adolescent interactions. Harrison, Wilson, Pine, and Chan, (1990) appropriately note that empirical studies have rarely been conducted to determine whether families indeed hold these values and whether these belief systems influence members' relationships with one another. Examinations of commonalities among minority families regarding childrearing beliefs and values reflect the sociocentrism/interdependence dimension previously discussed, with familial respect particularly emerging as an especially important theme among U. S. Latinos (Harwood et al., 2002).

Harwood, Miller, and Irizarry (1995) propose a concept aimed at capturing the notion of respect, and which they term "Proper Demeanor." According to Harwood et al. (1995), "Proper Demeanor implicitly assumes appropriate relatedness that is intrinsically contextual; it involves, by definition, knowing the level of courtesy and decorum required in a given situation in relation to other people of a particular age, sex, and social status" (p. 98). This construct emerged in open-ended interviews with lower- and middle-SES Puerto Rican mothers of 12- to 18-month-old infants. Further, several qualitative investigations of multigenerational Latino families have examined parents' descriptions of desirable qualities for their children (Arcia & Johnson, 1998; Delgado & Ford; 1998; Gonzalez-Ramos, Zayas, & Cohen, 1998). These results indicate that the qualities that these parents valued most were being respectful and obedient, honesty, and being responsible. One caveat to these findings, however, is that mothers sampled in these studies were largely from lower-SES backgrounds; thus, SES and culture may have been confounded. In attempts to address this caveat, Harwood and colleagues (Harwood, 1992; Harwood & Miller, 1991; Harwood et al., 1995; Harwood, Scholmerich, Ventura-Cook, Schulze, & Wilson, 1996) conducted further investigations using open-ended questionnaires with mothers of infants and toddlers. These findings indicated that the construct of Proper Demeanor transcends socioeconomic status to organize Puerto Rican and European American mothers' beliefs regarding desirable long-term socialization goals and child behavior. As Harwood and her colleagues also suggest that, in particular, the construct of Proper Demeanor is associated with perceptions of attachment behavior, long-term socialization goals and perceptions of desirable and undesirable child behavior, interactions with their infants in everyday settings, and beliefs and practices regarding the attainment of developmental milestones.

Other researchers have examined patterns of parental independence giving (Bulcroft, Carmody, & Bulcroft, 1996) in an effort to capture the construct of respect for authority within different cultural contexts. This study had a nationally representative sample of European American and Latino families with children between the ages of 12 and 18 answer questions on three separate measures of parental independence giving. These results indicated that compared to European American families, Latino families exerted higher degrees of direct control over their adolescents' behavior, both within and outside of the family environment. Further, as previously noted, Fuligni (1998) found similar results, concluding that "adolescents with non-European backgrounds held some beliefs and expectations consistent with a greater respect for parental authority and less of an emphasis on individual autonomy" (Fuligni, 1998, p. 790). Again, Fuligni had 12- to 16-year-old adolescents answer questionnaires that addressed acceptability of disagreement with parents; endorsement of parental authority; and expectations for behavioral autonomy.

Another, more tangential, line of research examines differences in child behaviors and not the construct of respect directly. Following a program of research that has spanned over 20 years, Knight and his colleagues (Knight, Cota, & Bernal, 1993; Knight, Durbo, & Chao, 1985; Knight & Kagan, 1977) have examined the issue of respect within the context of attitudes toward competitiveness. Participants in this study were Mexican American 9- to 12-year-old children and their mothers. Results from this work demonstrated that compared to European American children, Latino children had a greater tendency to choose cooperative rather than competitive solutions to resource allocation tasks. Moreover, supporting evidence by Flannagan (1996), investigating European American and Latino mother-kindergartner dyads, also suggested a deemphasis

on competition among Latino families, with the authors concluding that Latino families may discourage competition and confrontation in their children in efforts to teach respect and cooperation. It is important to note that this line of research does not directly examine the construct of respect, rather bases inferences about respect for others on differences in child behaviors.

Most centrally, Abraham, Graber, and Brooks-Gunn (2004) investigated a diverse sample of girls and their mothers to examine whether parent-child conflict during the late-childhood/preadolescent years varied among families characterized as having different cultural traditions regarding issues of respect. This study investigated interactions between 8- and 9-year old girls and their mothers and assessed girls' respect for parental authority using observational methods that link the construct of respect to specific observable behaviors. Findings from this study indicate that there are significant ethnic group differences in the level of respect that children have for parental authority. African American and Latina girls do indeed show more respect toward parental authority than European American girls, supporting the idea that within African American and Latino families, children follow a firm family hierarchical structure that places value on respect for parental authority and respect for elders. Moreover, results from this study also indicate that children's respect for parental authority is a significant predictor of how mothers interpret conflict with their daughters. Most intriguingly, this study also uncovered a significant interaction effect of respect and ethnicity, such that African American and Latina mothers report significantly more intense arguments when respect is low than do European American mothers.

Combined, these results underscore the importance of and highlight the need for empirical research that carefully examines the construct of respect within families from

different cultural backgrounds. A specific goal for this line of research should seek to develop a consensus on the definition and ways of operationalizing of this construct to ultimately create valid, reliable, consistently used measures. Of particular importance is the need to investigate the possible role of respect for parental authority within the context of parent-adolescent relationships and more specifically, parent-adolescent conflict.

In sum, Barber (1994) notes that in the face of adversity, minority parents may intentionally set their expectations and tailor their socialization strategies to prepare their children for the difficult reality of being a minority citizen. This is likely reflected in empirical findings that show African American and Latino families scoring higher on indices of authoritarian parenting practices. Such parenting behaviors may also reflect economic factors as well as important behavioral expectations of their children regarding respect and obedience.

Given that both African American and Hispanic families encourage family interdependence and that both groups of families emphasize obedience, dignity, and respect toward elders and parental authority, it is clear that further investigation is warranted in pursuing information on the nature of parent-child conflict within different ethnicities as a function of these varying cultural beliefs. Moreover, the issue of respect, which is defined in terms of showing honor and esteem to authority figures and elders, or deferring to a senior's greater command of pertinent skills (Briggs, 1986), is central to the current research. Although there is a growing literature examining cultural beliefs such as respect for parental authority, a consensus has not been reached in how to define, conceptualize, or operationalize this seemingly culture-specific construct. Of particular salience to the present investigation is the role of respect within the context of family interactions and parent-adolescent conflict specifically.

Conclusions

A large body of research has been conducted examining parent-adolescent relationships and conflict, with a growing body of literature addressing these issues within varying cultural and economic contexts. The mother-daughter relationship has been of particular interest and has spurred several researchers to hypothesize on the nature of conflict within this dyad. Many theoretical models have been proposed to explain increased conflict between parents and their children during the transition from late childhood to early adolescence, with the cognitive developmental model most salient to the current investigation. A dearth of empirical research still exists in both studies considering differing ecological backgrounds and cultural beliefs such as respect for parental authority while examining their possible moderating effects on conflict. Moreover, investigations with diverse samples examining changes in relationships and conflict within these families over time and children's overall well-being as related to conflict and other ecological factors would be of great heuristic value.

Significance of the Present Study

Using a diverse sample of African American, Latina, and European American girls and their mothers, the present study seeks to investigate associations among specific maternal parenting behaviors such as restrictiveness, nurturance, and communication; specific child behaviors such as respect for parental authority and characteristics such as pubertal timing and pubertal status; and dyadic characteristics such as observed relationship quality to investigate whether these associations affect parent-adolescent conflict and children's overall adjustment over time. The majority of previous research investigating changing parent-adolescent relationships has been cross-sectional in design, leaving researchers to speculate over whether observed changes are due to cohort

differences or developmental changes in individuals within families or in family interactions (Smetana et al., 2000). By contrast, the present investigation assesses girls who were 8 and 9 years of age at the initiation of the study, and who were then followed longitudinally and reassessed after 3 years in order to examine developmental changes in both individual characteristics and family relationships. The following research questions will be addressed in the present investigation.

General Longitudinal Examinations

The constructs that will be longitudinally examined include parent-child conflict, with examinations of conflict frequency and intensity over time; child respect for parental authority, with examinations of levels of respect over time; and maternal characteristics, with examinations of maternal restrictiveness, nurturance, and communication over time.

Conflict

1. Within this diverse sample, does conflict increase as girls transition from late-childhood to early adolescence, as previous research would suggest?

Based on prior work, results from the present investigation are expected to show an increase in parent-child conflict as girls move into the period of early adolescence.

Respect

2a. Does girls' level of respect for parental authority change over time?

Because the construct of respect has not been extensively examined, particularly within the context of parent-child conflict, it is uncertain if respect changes or differs at different points in development. One goal of the present study is to conduct the first longitudinal investigation of respect for parental authority in girls in an attempt to address this issue.

2b. Do the ethnic group differences in girls' respect change over time?

Because ethnic group differences in girls' respect for parental authority have been shown to exist during late-childhood, and because different cultural behavioral expectations would presumably still be in place, it is expected that ethnic group differences in respect would be maintained as girls mature.

Maternal Behaviors

3. Do maternal behaviors change as girls mature? Specifically, are ethnic group differences in maternal restrictiveness maintained longitudinally?

It is uncertain whether overall maternal restrictiveness, nurturance and communication will change over time; therefore, investigations of change in maternal behaviors over time are somewhat exploratory. However, it is expected that ethnic group differences in maternal restrictiveness will persist as girls enter adolescence.

Predicting Conflict

The Role of Maternal Parenting Behaviors in Conflict Over time

1. Do maternal restrictiveness, nurturance, and communication at initial assessment affect subsequent levels of conflict?

It is hypothesized that maternal behaviors will predict conflict over time, such that higher restrictiveness, lower nurturance, and lower communication will subsequently result in more conflict over time.

The Role of Girls' Characteristics in Conflict over Time

1. Does ethnicity moderate the association between respect and parent-adolescent conflict, specifically mother's report of intensity of conflict at the 3-year follow-up?

Results of the current investigation are expected to show that ethnicity does continue to moderate the association between respect and parent-adolescent conflict.

2. Is girls' level of respect at initial assessment predictive of conflict during early adolescence (follow-up)?

Based on previous results, an association between respect and mothers' report of conflict intensity is expected. Maternal reports of conflict frequency and daughter reports of frequency and intensity will also be investigated.

3. How is girl's initial pubertal development at baseline assessment (i.e., pubertal timing) linked with subsequent assessments of conflicts with mother and adjustment outcomes?

Based on previous research on pubertal timing and the various developmental consequences, it is expected that girls' initial pubertal development will be associated with subsequent assessments of parent-adolescent conflict, with early maturing girls experiencing more conflict than the other group. It is also expected that early maturing girls will have poorer adjustment outcomes when compared to other girls.

4. How is girls present pubertal status (i.e., pre-, middle-, advanced- pubertal) associated with conflict and adjustment outcomes?

Based on previous investigations concerning girls' pubertal development (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991; Steinberg, 1989), the present investigation predicts that conflict will be most frequent and most intense during mid-puberty. Investigations concerning the association between pubertal status and adolescent adjustment are somewhat exploratory in nature.

Links Between Conflict and Adjustment

1. Does parent-child conflict during the late-childhood, pre-adolescent period predict adjustment or behavioral problems during the early adolescent period?

Because much of the literature suggests that although parent-child conflict may be frequent, but not particularly intense in nature, the expectation is that conflict at baseline will not predict adjustment or behavioral problems at follow-up.

Dyadic Interaction

1. Is relationship quality assessed at baseline associated with subsequent assessments of parent-adolescent conflict?

Relationship quality at baseline is expected to be associated with conflict over time, such that the better the quality of the relationship during preadolescence, the less conflict experienced by the dyad and the less internalizing and externalizing problems experienced by the girls during early adolescence.

CHAPTER 3
METHOD

Participants

Participants in the present investigation include girls and mothers who are followed longitudinally to participate in a study of development from middle childhood to adolescence. The original sample consisted of 133 African American, European American, and Latina girls (45, 65, and 23, respectively) and their mothers. At the time of baseline assessments, girls were 8 and 9 years of age ($M = 8.41$, $SD = .60$), recruited from 3rd grade classrooms. At 3-year follow-up, there were 102 African American, European American, and Latina 6th grade girls (34, 54, and 14, respectively) and mothers, with the majority of girls between 11 and 12 years of age ($M = 11.85$, $SD = .81$). Girls and their families are from racially integrated, working and middle-class communities in the New York City area. The demographics of the families enrolled in the study are comparable to census tract data on families in these communities.

Nine families in the original sample either moved away but still participated via mailed questionnaires or phone interviews thus yielding no videotaped conflict task, or participated in conflict tasks but could not be included because of video problems. Thus, these families were neither included in the data, nor included in the attrition rate as they were indeed willing to participate. The actual attrition rate over the 3-year follow-up period was 16%. Due to the loss of 16% of the original sample from baseline (N = 133) to 3-year follow-up (N = 111), univariate analyses of nonresponse bias were conducted in

order to determine if the remaining sample is different on key demographic variables and outcomes assessed at baseline. Results indicated that the 22 families lost to attrition did not differ significantly on core variables from families that continued their participation, with the exception of maternal nurturance, $F(1, 116) = 13.56$, $p < .05$. This finding suggests that the means on maternal nurturance for families who dropped out of the study were significantly lower than for those who remained. Subsequent results involving maternal nurturance should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Procedure

Girls and their families were recruited via New York City and Yonkers public schools. Flyers describing the study were distributed to girls in third grade. Mothers were asked to have their daughters bring back to their classroom or mail to the project office a card with their name, address, and telephone number if they were interested in getting more information on the study. Eighty-five percent of those who returned contact information enrolled in the study. Parents who were interested in participating after follow-up telephone calls were scheduled for a home visit at which time informed consent was obtained for the parents for their own participation and for their child's participation. Girls provided their assent for participation as well. Research teams composed of two project staff members (one of the same ethnicity as the child, whenever possible) conducted in home data collection. Mothers and girls also completed additional survey measures in the 3 days following the home visit. Families received $60 for participation, and girls received a T-shirt at the end of the home visit. Girls and their families were contacted again in 3 years, and participated in the same 2-hour home visit protocol, with additional measures such as the Youth Self-Report survey and the self-report of Tanner staging. At this time, families received $75, and girls received tote bags

for their participation. IRB approval for recruitment and data collection protocols at each time was obtained from the sponsor institution (Teachers College, Columbia University).

Procedures for conflict assessment and interaction were the same at both time periods. During the home visits, girls and their mothers were given a checklist of conflicts and were asked to identify which issues they had had disagreements about in the past. If girls answered affirmatively to any of the issues, follow-up questions were asked regarding how often they had disagreed with their mother about this particular issue: monthly, weekly, or daily; and how bad the disagreements were: not heated, heated, or very heated. Girls completed the checklist via interview with a data collector. Mothers completed the checklist on their own. Later in the home visit, data collectors reviewed the two reports and chose two items that were used as the basis of subsequent discussion. Data collectors were instructed to choose items that were endorsed by both mother and daughter, and those that were most frequent or heated. If mothers and daughters did not report two of the same items, then one item from each person's list was chosen. They were then instructed to discuss these two issues using the following questions as guides in their discussion:

- What is the problem?
- How does the problem begin?
- Who becomes involved in the problem?
- What might be done to avoid this problem in the future?"

After reading the instructions and answering any questions, data collectors left the room for 5 to 7 minutes. This conflict task was videotaped for coding and scoring at a later time.

Codes used at both time periods were identical. Further, all coding was conducted by separate coders, not by original data collectors. A parent-child conflict codebook was developed for this study based on prior coding systems (Graber et al., 1999; Melby et al.,

1998); therefore, codes were subsequently developed and implemented at both time points. The process of identifying coding schemes, adapting them to interactions in the study, training new coders, coding, and monitoring reliabilities occurred over a period of two years. New coders were subsequently instructed to view a series of practice videos until such time that the coder had attained acceptable reliability. One coder (Coder 1) viewed both training and practice videos until an exact agreement of 80% and above with the gold standard score (i.e., the scores of the author) on all scales was attained for both time periods. Because it was extremely difficult for all coders to come to exact agreement with gold standard scoring, the remaining coders viewed training and practice videos until an 85% and above within one agreement with the gold standard score was attained. Reliability was monitored throughout the coding process and checked on 20% of all interactions coded. The order in which coders scored mother or daughter was counterbalanced. For the present investigation, girls' behaviors were assessed using the Listener Responsiveness and Defiance scales, and mothers' behaviors were assessed using the Communication and Listener Responsiveness scales. The relationship quality scale was assessed based on dyadic interactions. Coders were blind to study hypotheses. In addition to ethnicity and gender of all coders, reliabilities by coder for all scales at both time points are shown in Table 3-1. Because an ongoing debate exists involving statistical measurement of interrater agreement, the present investigation addresses this issue by reporting both percent agreement and kappa coefficients. As shown in the table, overall kappas in the present investigation ranged from .60-.69 which, according to Landis & Koch (1977) is indicative of substantial agreement above chance levels. Kappas were calculated and reported for both exact match (coder 1) and within one agreement (all others) on all behavioral scales.

Table 3-1. Reliabilities on observation scales for baseline and follow-up assessments (Baseline N = 133; follow-up N = 102)

	Baseline				3-year follow-up													
Coder	1		1		2		3		4		5		6		7			
Ethnicity	EA		EA		EA		EA		EA		LA		EA		EA			
Gender	M		M		F		F		F		F		F		M			
	E%	E κ	E%	E κ	W%	W κ	W%	W κ	W%	W κ	W%	W κ	W%	W κ	W%	W κ	Avg%	O k
Maternal behavior scales																		
Communication	94.42	.92	89.21	0.81	100.0	0.54	100	0.71	100	0.54	100	0.83	96.43	0.53	100.0	0.48	98.01	0.63
Listener responsive	100.00	.99	91.94	0.85	100.0	0.59	100	0.44	100	0.57	100	0.78	92.91	0.53	100.0	0.42	97.01	0.60
Avg % agmt per coder	97.21	.96	92.01	0.83	100.0	0.57	100	0.57	100	0.56	100	0.80	93.01	0.53	100.0	0.45	96.01	0.62
Child behavior scales																		
Listener responsive	83.3	0.78	97.3	0.96	100.0	0.53	100	0.43	100	0.62	100	0.79	96.4	0.51	92.3	0.31	98.12	0.61
Defiance	94.4	0.88	81.1	0.72	96.4	0.52	100	0.78	100	0.57	100	0.84	100	0.78	100.0	0.68	96.21	0.69
Avg % agmt per coder	94.0	0.83	81.0	0.84	96.0	0.53	100	0.60	100	0.60	100	0.82	98.2	0.64	96.2	0.50	97.17	0.65
Dyadic interaction scales																		
Relationship quality	94.43	0.92	89.22	0.83	100.0	0.64	100	0.60	96.12	0.58	97.14	0.74	96.42	0.59	100.0	0.40	96.01	0.64

Note: Coder 1 reliabilities based on exact match with Gold Standard at both time points. All other coders matched if within one. E% = Exact match percentage agreement. E κ = Exact match kappa, W κ = Within-one kappa. Oκ = Overall kappa. EA = European-American, LA = Latino, M = Male, F = Female. Avg = Average percent agreement per scale for follow-up.

Measures

The present investigation incorporates a combination of survey, interview, and observational methods using multiple respondents (mothers and daughters). All measures used at both baseline and follow-up were identical, unless otherwise specified. The only exception is with the adolescent adjustment measures, in which case mother-report measures varied from baseline to follow-up, and child-report measures were only used at follow-up. Clarifications on these particular measures are discussed further in the following sections.

Parent-child Conflict

Girls and their mothers reported on the issues they had disagreements about using the Issues Checklist (Hetherington & Clingempeel, 1992). This measure has been used for the purposes of identifying commonly occurring disagreements among parents and children ages 9 through 16. Sample Questions in the Issues Checklist include "Have you had a disagreement with your mother/daughter about . . . your/her behavior toward your siblings? . . . your/her homework? . . . keeping your/her room clean?" Mothers and daughters also reported any other conflicts they may have experienced that did not appear on the list. Three variables, number, frequency, and intensity of conflicts, were scored from this measure to tap multiple dimensions of parent-child conflict. The number of issues identified was based on the sum of all endorsed items (possible range 0-27). For each item endorsed, the frequency with which the conflict occurred was rated on a 3-point scale (1 = monthly, 2 = weekly, 3 = daily). A variable was created to tap frequency of any conflict by summing the frequency scores. In this sample, the number and frequency of conflicts were highly correlated ($r = 0.90$ for mothers and $r = .93$ for daughters); hence, only the frequency of conflict variables were used in analyses. The

intensity of the conflict was also rated on a 3-point scale (0 = not heated, 1 = heated, 2 = very heated). The intensity variable was scored by taking the mean of the "heated" rating for each item that was endorsed. For example, if a girl endorsed five items, the average intensity was based on the intensity for these items. Hence, intensity is not based on the same items for all respondents, as intensity can only be scored if an item is endorsed, and endorsed items vary by respondent; thus, the variable taps average intensity for each individual respondent. Separate variables were created for mother's and daughter's reports on the frequency and intensity of conflict for both times of assessment.

Child Adjustment Outcomes

Mother's assessment of child internalizing/externalizing behaviors.

Behavioral problems were assessed by mothers using the Behavior Problems Index (Peterson & Zill, 1986) at baseline. The Behavior Problems Index (BPI) is a 28-item scale widely used in national health surveys (Peterson & Zill, 1986; Zill, 1985). The BPI deals with specific behavior problems that the child may or may not have exhibited in the previous three months. Items from the BPI were derived from the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983) and other measures (see Peterson & Zill, 1986); the scale is scored on a 0 to 2 Likert scale. Examples of internalizing items include "She is withdrawn, not involved with others"; "She feels worthless and/or inferior." Examples of externalizing items are "She bullies or is cruel/mean to others"; "She has trouble getting along with her teachers." At 3-year follow-up, children's behavior problems were assessed by mothers using the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1983). The CBCL has 118 items that describe specific behavioral and emotional problems. Of these items, there were 6 internalizing and 10 externalizing items that were comparable on both the CBCL and the BPI from baseline.

Mothers rated their child on how true each item is now or has been within the past 6 months using the following scale: 0 = Not True (as far as you know); 1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True; 2 = Very True or Often True. Subscale scores for internalizing and externalizing behaviors were computed by summing the scores on the items on each of the scales. Respective alphas for both time points on internalizing and externalizing behaviors are *Cronbach's* α = .66 and .85, for baseline assessment; and α = .83 and .88, for follow-up.

Girls' assessment of internalizing/externalizing behaviors. At 3-year follow-up, girls self-reported on their behavior problems using the Youth Self-Report (YSR; Achenbach, 1991). Youths rate themselves for each item using a three-point response scale ranging from 0 = Not True; 1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True; 2 = Very True or Often True, for the past six months. Subscale scores for internalizing and externalizing behaviors were computed by summing scores on items tapping each of these scales (*Cronbach's* α = .88 and .89, respectively). Examples of internalizing items include I feel lonely; I feel that no one loves me. Examples of externalizing items include I argue a lot; I physically attack people. The YSR is the most commonly used measure of internalizing and externalizing behaviors among youth, providing extensive reliability and validity data for children ages 11 to 18. Thus, the measure was added at follow-up but was not appropriate at baseline as girls were 8 and 9 years of age.

Child Characteristics

Child respect. Respect is operationally defined as a composite variable of the Defiance and Listener Responsiveness Scales (Melby et al., 1998) that are coded for the girls during the videotaped conflict task. Listener responsiveness assesses how actively

and attentively girls listen to their mothers during the interaction task. This scale was assessed on a 5-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from 1 = Not at all characteristic to 5 = Mainly characteristic. Indicators of listener responsiveness include physically attending or orienting to speaker; showing interest in what the other person is saying via eye-contact, head nods, etc; and acknowledging and validating the speaker. The reliability score for this scale was 83% exact agreement at baseline (κ = .78) and 98% agreement at follow-up (κ = .61). The defiance scale taps the extent to which the child responds to the mother in a defiant manner using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = Not at all characteristic to 5 = Mainly characteristic. Indicators of defiance are actively disobeying or ignoring the parent; engaging in activities contrary to the request of the parent; angry or irritable responses; etc. The reliability for this scale was 94% exact agreement at baseline (κ = .88) and 96% agreement at follow-up (κ = .69). As indicated, the defiance scale measures the extent to which the child actively ignores or disobeys the parent and the listener responsiveness scale measures the extent to which the child attends to, shows interest in, acknowledges, and validates what her mother is saying. The two scales are summed such that high listener responsiveness and low defiance (reversed scored) result in high scores for respect.

Girls' pubertal development. Mothers completed a paper-and-pencil measure of Tanner stages of pubertal development for breast stage and pubic hair growth (based on drawings; Morris & Udry, 1980) in their questionnaire packet at both time points. Mothers have been found to be accurate and reliable raters of pubertal development when compared to physician or health practitioner ratings (Brooks-Gunn, Warren, Rosso, & Gargiulo, 1987; Dorn, Susman, Nottelmann, Inoff-Germain, & Chrousos, 1991). Tanner

stages are rated on a 1 (no development) to 5 (development complete) scale for each indicator of puberty. The level of pubertal development found in the present study is comparable to that reported for African American and European American 8- and 9-year-old girls in Herman-Giddens et al. (1997) large study of puberty in girls using physician ratings. However, because there have been some reports that mothers may be less accurate at assessing breast development, in order to be conservative, analyses are based on ratings of pubic hair growth.

Because both pubertal timing and pubertal status have been found to be important indicators of conflict and adjustment during adolescence, both were considered in the present investigation. At initial baseline assessment, pubertal timing and pubertal status were confounded, as girls who have started puberty at ages 8 and 9 are considered early maturers. To longitudinally assess pubertal timing and its effects, girls who had begun puberty at the initial baseline visit (i.e., pubic hair score > 1) were considered early maturers and were subsequently compared to all others. The pubertal status variable was assessed at the 3-year follow-up. It is a three group variable consisting of prepubertal (no development), advanced pubertal (postmenarcheal), and midpubertal (all others). It should be noted that despite careful efforts, some confounding between pubertal status and timing can not be avoided.

Maternal Characteristics

Parental attitudes and practices. Mothers completed the Child Rearing Practices Report (CRPR; Block, 1965) to assess disciplinary behaviors and general socializing behaviors. Items are assessed on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = Never to 5 = Almost always, and are scored into two subscales tapping nurturant and restrictive (disciplinary) practices. This measure has demonstrated reliability with

ethnically and economically diverse samples of mothers (Kim & Wong, 2002; Lim & Park, 1994), although the actual reliabilities as assessed by Cronbach's alpha in the present sample were low at baseline assessment (α = .66 for restrictiveness, and α = .54 for nurturance), and moderate at follow-up assessment (α = .75 for restrictiveness, and α = .65 for nurturance). Examples of restrictive questions are "I teach my child that in one way or another, punishment will always find her when she is bad"; and "I let my child know how ashamed and disappointed I am when she misbehaves." Examples of nurturant questions are "I encourage my child to talk about her troubles"; and "I express my affection by hugging, kissing, and holding my child."

Mother's communication behaviors. To assess mothers' communication behaviors during the interaction, two scales were used; the mother's communication and listener responsiveness behaviors were coded using the videotaped conflict task. The degree to which mothers communicated effectively with their daughters during the interaction task was assessed with a 5-point Likert-type scale, with response options ranging from 1 = Not at all competent to 5 = Highly competent. Indicators of communication are stating one's position clearly and concisely; validating and acknowledging daughter's point of view; paraphrasing; and being fully engaged in the conversation. Reliability for this scale was 94% exact agreement at baseline (κ = .92) and 98% agreement at follow-up (κ = .63). The same listener responsiveness scale that was scored for daughters was used to assess the degree to which mothers are interested in, acknowledge, and validate their daughters during the interaction. Reliability for this scale was 100% agreement at baseline (κ = 1.0) and 97% agreement at follow-up (κ = .60). Communication and listener responsiveness scales were subsequently summed to tap

mothers' communication behaviors with high scores indicating better communication behaviors.

Dyadic Interaction

Relationship quality. This scale assesses the observer's evaluation of the quality of the dyad's relationship using a 5-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from 1 = Negative to 5 = Positive. A negative rating characterized the dyad's relationship as unhappy, conflicted, or uninvolved. A score of 3 characterized the relationship as being between the two extremes, neither excessively negative nor positive. A positive rating characterized the relationship as open, satisfying, pleasing, communicative, and warm. The reliability for this scale was 94% agreement at baseline ($\kappa = .92$) and 96% agreement at follow-up ($\kappa = .64$).

Family Demographics/Background

Mothers were interviewed by a data collector during the home visit while the child engaged in tasks with another data collector. Mothers also completed surveys after the home visit. In the interview and survey, mothers provided background information on themselves and the family. The median family income for all families was $34,500 and the median family size was four. Because a number of participants (approximately 20%) refused to release income data and it was not a significant variable in preliminary analyses, income was not included in analyses reported here. The demographic data included in this investigation were mother's education, mother's marital status, mother's marital status change over time, mother's employment status, and race/ethnicity. All demographic variables are used as categorical variables. Baseline reports are used for all variables with the exception of marital status, as it changed for some mothers from

baseline to follow-up. For sample composition and characteristics on demographic variables, see Table 3-2.

Table 3-2. Sample characteristics based on examinations of categorical demographic variables (Baseline N = 133; Follow-up N = 102)

	Baseline	3-year follow-up
Ethnic background		
African American	34%	33%
European American	49%	53%
Latino	17%	14%
Age M(SD)		
Mother	35.4 (6.8)	39.3 (5.2)
Child	8.4 (.6)	11.9 (.6)
Maternal education		
H.S. Diploma, GED, or less	35%	--
Any education surpassing H.S.	65%	--
Marital status		
Married	59%	68%
Not married	41%	32%
Change in marital status		
No partner at T1→Partner at T2		21%
Partner at T1→No partner at T2		7%
No change in marital status		72%

Note. No significant change in maternal education from baseline to follow-up.

Ethnicity was determined using self-report information provided by mothers during their interview. In cases where mother's and daughter's ethnicity did not match (e.g., mother reported herself as Latina and daughter as multi-ethnic), the mother's ethnicity was used, as it would be more likely that mothers would provide daughters with the same cultural environment and expectations that have been customary for the mother. The term Latino includes people who identified themselves as being from Puerto Rican, Dominican, or Hispanic (nonspecified) decent. Similarly, the term African American includes people who identified themselves as being African American, Black, Caribbean Islander, or Black (nonspecified) decent.

Mother's education was dichotomized by categorizing mothers into two categories: 0 = high school diploma, GED, or less; 1 = any education surpassing high school diploma or GED.

Mother's employment status was dichotomized by categorizing mothers into two categories: 0 = not employed; 1 = employed.

At baseline, marital status was coded as 0 = married (including cohabitating couples); 1 = not married (single, divorced, and widowed). At the follow-up assessment, mothers reported on whether there had been a change in marital status. This follow-up variable for marital status change was coded 0 = no partner at baseline, partner at follow-up; 1 = partner at baseline, no partner at follow-up; 2 = no change in marital status. Thus, two separate variables were included in the analyses to control for marital status and marital status change.

Analysis Plan

Initial assessments on girl's and mother's behaviors, girl's and mother's reports of conflict frequency and intensity, and dyadic relationship quality were all previously analyzed for a separate study (Abraham et al., 2004). Results of this first study found that there are significant ethnic group differences in the level of respect that these 8- and 9year-old children have for parental authority. African American and Latina girls showed more respect toward parental authority than European American girls. Moreover, results from this study also indicated that children's respect for parental authority is a significant predictor of how mothers interpret conflict with their daughters. Most intriguingly, this study also uncovered a significant interaction effect of respect and ethnicity, such that African American and Latina mothers reported significantly more intense arguments when respect was low, whereas European American mothers' reports of conflict intensity did not significantly vary by level of respect.

The current investigation extends this research and follows these same girls and mothers longitudinally to include a 3-year follow-up assessment. The present study examines conflict frequency and intensity as reported by mothers and daughters, yielding four dependent conflict measures. The current investigation also examines two adjustment outcomes: internalizing behaviors and externalizing behaviors (both self- and mother-report), as well as girl's respect for parental authority and girl's pubertal development. Finally, the current study investigates maternal parenting behaviors and dyadic relationship quality as evaluated by trained observers.

All models control for mother's education and employment status at baseline, as these variables did not change significantly during the 3-year period. Additionally, because marital status did significantly change over time, both marital status at baseline and marital status changes at follow-up are included as covariates. Thus, analyses of covariance and hierarchical regressions were conducted to include control variables as covariates in the analyses. Analyses that include outcomes at follow-up visit control for their outcomes at baseline by using residual change scores as dependent measures. Models were tested separately with each outcome variable of interest. In all models, interactions between the main predictor variables and girls' ethnicity are tested.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

Descriptive Analyses

Demographic information for the total sample is presented in Table 4-1. Mothers' age differed by ethnic group F (2, 125) = 3.95, $p < .05$, with European American mothers being significantly older than African American and Latina mothers. The majority of mothers in the current sample had high school diplomas or college degrees with 65% of all mothers having any education surpassing a high school diploma. Hence, in all analyses higher educational attainment (> than a high school diploma or GED) was contrasted with no higher educational attainment; the distribution of this variable did not differ by ethnic group. Significant differences were found in marital status χ^2 (2, $N = 133$) = 19.18, $p < .001$, with more European American and Latina mothers being married at baseline assessment. Additionally, there were group differences in the percent of mothers who no longer had partners at the follow-up assessment period χ^2 (2, $N = 102$) = 20.73, $p < .001$, with more Latina mothers no longer having partners than European American or African American mothers. Most of the mothers in this sample had some type of employment outside of the home at baseline and follow-up. Most mothers who reported a change in employment situation simply changed jobs. Employment status in this sample did not vary by race or ethnicity. Because preliminary analyses indicate significant effects of maternal education, marital status, marital status change, and employment status on core variables, these variables are included as covariates in all subsequent analyses.

Table 4-1. Correlations among core study variables measured at baseline assessment

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Conflict	.46**	.23*	.24**	.08	.18	.28**	.16	.23*	-.13	-.12	.19*	-.15
1. Child-reported conflict frequency												
2. Child-reported conflict intensity		.18*	.20*	.04	.13	.17	.23*	.26**	-.15	-.05	.05	-.13
3. Mother-reported conflict frequency			.39**	-.14	.12	.23*	.13	.31**	-.20*	-.04	.10	-.21*
4. Mother-reported conflict intensity				-.08	.18	.13	.17	.29**	-.21*	.03	.12	-.16
Child behaviors												
5. Child respect					.06	.06	-.08	-.03	.20*	-.12	.03	.47**
6. Child-reported Internalizing						.66**	.03	-.05	-.12	-.12	-.08	-.04
7. Child-reported externalizing							.05	.16	-.15	.03	.01	-.15
8. Mother-reported Internalizing								.50**	-.15	-.09	.02	-.12
9. Mother-reported Externalizing									-.22*	-.10	.13	-.11
Maternal behaviors												
10. Communication										.04	-.21*	.57**
11. Nurturance											.16	.01
12. Restrictiveness												-.21*
Dyadic behaviors												
13. Relationship quality												

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Intercorrelations between core variables are presented in Table 4-2 for the initial time period, and in Table 4-3 for the follow-up time period. Associations between variables were generally low to moderate with the conflict variables, in particular, significantly correlated to one another, as expected. Further, conflict variables were significantly associated with children's externalizing behaviors as reported by mothers at both time points. Child-reported externalizing behaviors were also significantly correlated with child-reported conflict frequency and mother-reported conflict frequency at baseline ($r = .28$ and .23 respectively) and with child-reported conflict intensity, child-reported conflict frequency and mother-reported conflict frequency at follow-up ($r = .31$, .47, and .22 respectively). Child-reported internalizing behaviors did not show significant correlations at baseline, but did correlate significantly with child-reported conflict intensity and child-reported conflict frequency at follow-up ($r = .27$ and .37 respectively).

Although generally not statistically significant, the trend regarding children's respect for parental authority was that there was a negative association between respect and conflict, especially as children got older (see correlations for follow-up assessments in Table 4-1). Respect for authority was negatively associated with mother-reported conflict frequency at follow-up, indicating that when children were older, the more respect children showed to their mothers, less conflict frequency was reported by mothers. Moreover, children's respect for parental authority was positively associated with maternal communication behaviors at both time points ($r = .19$ at baseline, and $r = .30$ at follow-up) suggesting that more competent communication is associated with higher respect levels.

When considering maternal behaviors, conflict in general was negatively associated with mothers' communication behaviors at both time points; thus, the lower

Table 4-2. Correlations among core study variables measured at follow-up assessment (with the exception of child-reported YSR at T1)

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Conflict												
1. Child-reported conflict frequency	.32**	.36**	.24*	-0.10	.37**	.47**	0.10	.27**	-.32**	-.33**	.22*	-0.19
2. Child-reported conflict intensity		0.01	0.18	0.00	.27**	.31**	0.20	0.16	-0.17	-0.11	0.11	-0.16
3. Mother-reported conflict frequency			.38**	-.23*	0.14	.22*	.32**	.47**	-.20*	-0.19	0.18	-.36**
4. Mother-reported conflict intensity				-0.17	0.17	0.15	0.18	.27**	-.21*	-0.17	.21*	-0.17
Child behaviors												
5. Child respect					0.04	-0.10	-0.10	-0.11	.30**	0.17	-0.10	.54**
6. Child-reported Internalizing						.66**	0.19	0.12	-.24*	-.22*	0.04	0.00
7. Child-reported externalizing							0.11	.34**	-.39**	-.29**	0.17	-.21*
8. Mother-reported Internalizing								.44**	-0.10	-0.13	0.05	-0.11
9. Mother-reported Externalizing									-.25*	-.35**	.25*	-.30**
Maternal behaviors												
10. Communication										.32**	-.37**	.52**
11. Nurturance											-0.10	0.15
12. Restrictiveness												-.29**
Dyadic behaviors												
13. Relationship quality												

** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Table 4-3. Means and standard deviations of study variables and their differences across the three ethnic groups

	EA[a] (N = 65, 54)		AA (N = 45, 34)		L (N = 23, 14)		Total (N=133, 102)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F (or χ)	Post-hoc[b]
Conflict:										
Child-reported										
Conflict intensity (T1)	0.40	0.43	0.50	0.42	0.61	0.55	0.47	0.45	1.77	
Conflict frequency (T1)	16.44	10.71	17.95	10.66	20.62	11.86	17.65	10.90	1.19	
Conflict intensity (T2)	0.27	0.30	0.24	0.26	0.33	0.37	0.27	0.30	0.46	
Conflict frequency (T2)	12.59	9.47	14.00	8.60	10.93	7.83	12.83	8.95	0.62	
Mother-reported										
Conflict intensity (T1)	0.31	0.24	0.42	0.38	0.37	0.35	0.36	0.31	1.46	
Conflict frequency (T1)	16.16	7.01	17.81	8.74	18.45	10.63	17.10	8.26	0.83	
Conflict intensity (T2)	0.23	0.23	0.24	0.32	0.18	0.25	0.23	0.26	0.29	
Conflict frequency (T2)	17.08	10.26	20.41	10.48	15.79	11.17	18.02	10.51	1.42	
Child behaviors:										
Respect										
Child respect (T1)	6.85	2.17	7.49	1.42	7.78	1.04	7.23	1.81	3.22*	AA,L>EA
Child respect (T2)	6.98	1.59	7.42	1.37	8.08	0.95	7.27	1.48	4.23*	L>AA,EA
Child-reported adjustment										
Internalizing behaviors (T2)	11.19	8.16	11.47	7.85	12.07	7.25	11.40	7.88	0.07	
Externalizing behaviors (T2)	8.52	6.05	10.77	9.33	7.13	4.20	9.10	7.20	1.60	
Mother-reported adjustment										
Internalizing behaviors (T1)	1.73	2.39	1.47	1.65	1.96	1.70	1.67	2.06	0.40	
Externalizing behaviors(T1)	4.20	3.02	5.22	4.19	4.39	3.29	4.58	3.51	1.09	
Internalizing behaviors (T2)	1.21	1.50	1.02	1.19	2.07	2.16	1.27	1.54	2.44	
Externalizing behaviors (T2)	3.17	2.63	4.67	3.70	3.29	2.58	3.67	3.07	2.68	

Table 4-3. Continued

	EA[a] (N = 65, 54)		AA (N = 45, 34)		L (N = 23, 14)		Total (N=133, 102)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F (or χ)	Post-hoc[b]
Maternal behaviors:										
Communication (T1)	7.63	1.39	7.05	1.80	7.30	1.17	7.38	1.53	1.90	
Communication (T2)	7.80	1.35	6.56	1.24	7.57	1.09	7.35	1.39	9.96***	EA, L>AA
Restrictive (T1)	2.50	0.64	3.15	0.70	3.04	0.80	2.80	0.75	12.60***	AA, L>EA
Restrictive (T2)	2.53	0.77	3.13	0.68	2.88	0.60	2.77	0.76	6.82**	AA, L>EA
Nurturant (T1)	4.64	0.31	4.66	0.3	4.54	0.75	4.63	0.40	0.63	
Nurturant (T2)	4.62	0.39	4.59	0.45	4.67	0.41	4.62	0.41	0.15	
Dyadic behaviors:										
Relationship Quality (T1)	3.44	0.88	3.14	0.86	3.25	0.72	3.30	0.85	1.59	
Relationship Quality (T2)	3.31	0.82	2.85	0.66	3.79	1.05	3.23	0.85	7.35**	EA, L>AA

[a] EA = European American; AA = African American; L = Latina. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Variable full names: T1 = measured at baseline; T2 = measured at 3-year follow-up

[b] LSD post-hoc comparisons

communication skills the higher the conflict. Similarly, maternal communication was negatively associated with children's externalizing behaviors as reported by mothers at baseline (r = -.22) and children's externalizing behaviors as reported by mothers (r = -.25) at follow-up as well as child-reported internalizing behaviors (r = -.24) and child-reported externalizing behaviors (r = -.39) at follow-up. Moreover, maternal restrictiveness was positively associated with child-reported conflict frequency at baseline (r = .19) and mother-reported conflict intensity (r = .21) and child-reported conflict frequency (r = .22) at follow-up. Maternal restrictiveness was also significantly associated with children's externalizing behaviors as reported by mothers at follow-up assessments (r = .25). Finally, with regard to maternal behaviors, mother's self-reported nurturance was negatively associated with conflict and adjustment at follow-up; child-reported conflict frequency (r = -.33), mother-reported externalizing behaviors (r = -.35), child-reported internalizing behaviors (r = -.22), and child-reported externalizing behaviors (r = -.29) specifically.

Finally, when examining mothers' and daughters' relationship quality, respect was strongly associated with relationship quality both at baseline (r = .47) and at follow-up (r = .54). Relationship quality was also positively associated with maternal communication at both time points (r = .57 and .52, respectively) and negatively associated with maternal restrictiveness at both time points (r = -.21 and -.29, respectively).

General Longitudinal Examinations

Core study variables were examined longitudinally in order to assess changes over time. All of the analyses included mother's education, employment status, and marital status at baseline; and marital status change at follow-up as control variables. Change in behaviors over time was computed by regressing follow-up measures on

baseline measures of each core variable, and using the residual change scores as indicators of change. Variables analyzed in this section were conflict; child behaviors: respect and adjustment; maternal behaviors: restrictiveness, nurturance, and communication; and dyadic relationship quality. In addition to reporting on longitudinal analyses in this section, cross-sectional differences by ethnicity were also included to provide a full description of the data.

Conflict

Because conflict scores were treated as within subjects variables, with conflict frequency and intensity repeated over two time periods, and because conflict scores have been shown to be correlated, use of multivariate analysis of covariance allows for more statistical power than conducting separate ANCOVAs; hence, a doubly-repeated measure MANCOVA was conducted. The term 'doubly' refers to the inclusion of more than one variable being repeated. Mothers and daughters each reported on conflict frequency and intensity for two time periods, thus, yielding eight separate conflict measures included in the model (i.e., two mother and two daughter conflict variables at each of the two times of assessment). Results from this analysis indicated that contrary to prediction, conflict as reported by mothers and daughters did not significantly increase over time [Wilks' Lambda $F(4, 90) = .85$, $p = .49$, $\eta^2 = .04$]. In fact, both conflict frequency and intensity decreased from baseline to follow-up with the exception of mother-reported conflict frequency, which increased as predicted. This increase, however, was not statistically significant, $F(1, 97) = 1.27$, $p = .26$. Moreover, cross-sectional analyses for ethnicity revealed no significant ethnic group differences in either child-reported or mother-reported conflict at either time point. (Possible explanations for these results are

addressed in the discussion section.) Means and standard deviations for mother and daughter report on conflict frequency and intensity are reported in Table 4-3.

Internalizing/Externalizing Behaviors

Because data on child-reported adjustment was available only at follow-up assessment and mother-reported adjustment scores were assessed at both time points, longitudinal examinations were conducted on mother's reports of child internalizing and externalizing behaviors. A doubly-repeated MANCOVA was conducted with maternal demographic variables used as covariates and mother-reported internalizing and externalizing scores were measured repeatedly. Results indicated that there were no significant changes in children's internalizing or externalizing behaviors over time, as assessed by mothers. Further results also indicated that the interaction between adjustment scores and ethnicity was not statistically significant, indicating no ethnic group differences in changes of mother-reported internalizing and externalizing scores over time.

Child Behaviors

Respect. In order to examine girls' level of respect and ethnic group differences over time, a repeated measures ANCOVA was conducted with respect as the within-subjects variable, ethnicity as the between-subjects variable, and maternal education, marital status, marital status change, and maternal employment status as covariates. Results revealed that the main effect for respect was not significant [$F(1, 92) = .04$, $p = .84$, $\eta^2 = .00$], indicating that child respect for parental authority did not significantly change over time (see Figure 4-1). Moreover, as predicted, the interaction effect between respect and ethnicity was not significant [$F(2, 92) = .43$, $p = .65$, $\eta^2 = .01$], indicating that

ethnic group differences in changes of child respect over time were not significant. Thus, respect levels did not show a significant change from baseline to follow-up, and ethnic group differences in respect were not changed as girls matured, as predicted.

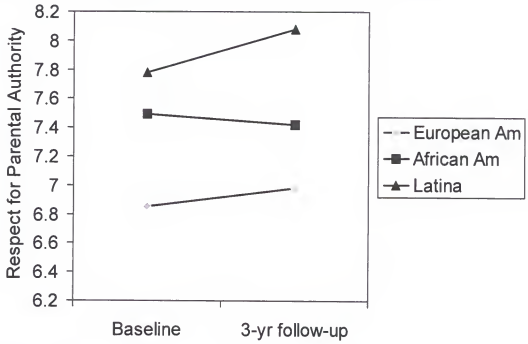

Figure 4-1. Child respect for parental authority

Further, significant ethnic group differences were found at both baseline and follow-up (see Table 4-3 for *F* and *p* values), with African American and Latina girls scoring significantly higher on respect measures than European American girls at baseline; and Latina girls scoring significantly higher than African American and European American girls at follow-up. Although the ethnicity by time interaction was not significant, the variations in cross-sectional group differences at each time are accounted for by examination of the means. Means indicated that European American girls demonstrated a slight increase in respect over time, African American girls retained similar respect levels over time, and Latina girls experienced an increase in respect over time.

Maternal Behaviors

To examine changes in maternal behaviors and ethnic group differences in maternal restrictiveness over time, a doubly-repeated measures MANCOVA was conducted with maternal behaviors (i.e., communication, nurturance, and restrictiveness) as repeated measures and ethnicity as a between subjects variable. Results indicated that maternal communication, nurturance, and restrictiveness scores showed no significant differences over time, and were not statistically different at baseline and at follow-up, Wilks' Lambda $F(3, 82) = .70$, $p = .56$, $\eta^2 = .03$ (see Table 4-3 for means and standard deviations). To further investigate ethnic group differences over time, a marginally significant interaction between changes in maternal behaviors and ethnicity, $F(6, 164) = 1.90$, $p = .08$, $\eta^2 = .07$ in the overall model was followed by a series of univariate tests conducted to further examine the possible interaction between ethnicity and maternal behaviors. These results indicated that maternal communication significantly varied by ethnicity $F(2, 102) = 6.88$, $p < .05$, at follow-up, such that European American and Latina mothers displayed higher communication behaviors than African American mothers. Moreover, to further examine the possible ethnicity by maternal restrictiveness interaction, univariate tests were conducted. However, to prevent type I error inflation in this analysis, alpha level was set at .017 by Bonferoni correction. As Figure 4-2 indicates, these results revealed a marginally significant restrictiveness by ethnicity interaction, $F(2, 84) = 2.97$, $p = .06$, suggesting a tendency for mothers' restrictive, disciplinary behaviors to vary, as predicted, by ethnicity over time. Further, LSD post-hoc results revealed that Latina and African American mothers were significantly higher than European American on their restrictive disciplinary scores. Means and standard

deviations for maternal and child behaviors by ethnicity are listed in Table 4-3. As these means indicate, African American and Latina mothers consistently endorse more restrictive, disciplinary behaviors than do their European American counterparts.

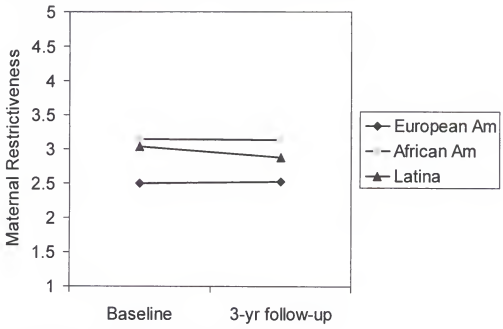

Figure 4-2. Maternal restrictiveness by ethnicity

Dyadic Relationship Quality

To examine changes in mothers' and daughters' observed relationship quality over time, a repeated measure ANCOVA was conducted with the four demographic variables as covariates and ethnicity as an independent variable. Results revealed that for the entire group, the main effect of dyadic relationship quality was not significant; thus indicating that relationship quality did not significantly change over time. However, a significant interaction between relationship quality and ethnicity, $F(2, 92) = 4.08$, $p < .05$ was revealed. Follow-up univariate tests indicate that European American and Latina mothers and daughters in this sample were rated by coders as having higher quality relationships than African American dyads, $F(2, 102) = 6.02$, $p < .05$ by the follow-up

assessment when examining change over time. Means and standard deviations of dyadic relationship quality for all three ethnic groups are listed in Table 4-3.

Predicting Conflict

The Role of Maternal Parenting Behaviors in Conflict Over time

To address whether maternal behaviors assessed at baseline would affect change in conflict over time, four separate multiple hierarchical regressions were conducted, with covariate variables entered into Step 1, and maternal behavior measures as the predictor variables entered into Step 2. A standardized residual change score for each of the four reported conflict scores was computed by regressing follow-up conflict scores on to baseline conflict scores. By using these residual change scores as dependent variables, the baseline levels of conflict measured at initial assessments were taken into consideration. In predicting changes of child-reported conflict frequency, findings indicated that the covariates explained 4.4% of the variance in Step 1, and maternal behaviors explained an additional 4.4% of the variance. The overall model, however, was not significant [$R^2 = .04$, $F(3, 87) = 1.41$, $p = .25$]. Similarly, in predicting changes of child-reported conflict intensity, findings indicate that although the covariates explained 2.8% of the variance in Step 1, and the three maternal parenting behaviors explained an additional 6.4% of the variance, the model was not statistically significant [$R^2 = .06$, $F(3, 87) = 2.04$, $p = .11$ for overall model]. Likewise, maternal behaviors were not shown to be significant predictors of changes in mother-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .01$, $F(3, 85) = .35$, $p = .78$] or intensity [$R^2 = .04$, $F(3, 85) = .03$, $p = .46$]. In sum, these findings suggest that neither maternal restrictiveness, nurturance, nor communication at initial assessment was a significant predictor of the 4 types of conflict scores measured at follow-up, when considering the level of conflict at baseline, as well as the

covariate/demographic variables. Thus, the hypothesis that higher restrictiveness, lower nurturance, and lower communication would subsequently result in more conflict over time was not supported.

The Role of Girls' Characteristics in Conflict over time and at Follow-up

Respect. To address the issue of respect at baseline as a predictor of subsequent conflict, a series of hierarchical linear regressions were conducted using baseline respect as the predictor variable and each of the four separate conflict measures for mothers and daughters at follow-up as criterion variables. Again, to account for initial, baseline levels of conflict, the dependent variables used in the regression models are residual change scores. Results revealed that none of the overall models was predictive of child-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .03$, $F(1, 93) = .25$, $p = .62$]; child-reported conflict intensity [$R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 93) = 1.02$, $p = .31$]; mother-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 91) = .64$, $p = .43$]; or mother-reported conflict intensity frequency [$R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 91) = .57$, $p = .45$]. In sum, analyses revealed that initial level of child respect toward parental authority did not significantly predict change in conflict, when controlling for conflict at baseline and demographic variables.

Because previous analyses examining mother and daughter reports of conflict found moderating effects of ethnicity on the association between child respect and mother's report of conflict intensity, specifically, the current study followed this same line of investigations to include follow-up assessments. To further investigate moderating effects at follow-up, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted for each ethnic group, where demographics were entered in Step 1, ethnicity and respect were entered into Step 2, and an ethnicity by respect interaction term was entered in Step 3, in order to predict conflict. Only the model predicting mother-reported conflict intensity resulted in

statistical significant findings. In this model, regression analyses revealed that covariates explained 1.4% of the variance in step 1, ethnicity and respect explained an additional 3.9% of the variance in step 2, and that the ethnicity by respect interaction term explained an additional 5.4% of the variance in step 3, with the overall model being significant, $F(1, 93) = 5.57$, $p < .05$. In sum, the interaction between ethnicity and respect was significant only when predicting mother's report of conflict intensity, $\beta = -1.55$, $t = -2.36$, $p = .02$, but not mother's report of frequency or daughter's report of frequency or intensity. Thus, even after controlling for the covariates and separate contributions of ethnicity and child respect at follow-up, the interaction between ethnicity and child respect was significant, and explained an additional 5.4% of the variance in change in mother-report conflict intensity at the 3-year follow-up.

To further specify the observed interaction between ethnicity and mother-reported conflict intensity, separate hierarchical regression analyses were conducted for each ethnic group with the demographics entered into Step 1 and respect into Step 2 in order to predict mother-reported conflict intensity. Partial regression lines for each model were plotted together to show comparison results in Figure 4-3. As shown in the figure, the different degrees of slope across the three ethnic groups indicate the interaction effect between ethnicity and child respect at the follow-up assessment period. For European American families, the relationship between child respect at follow-up and mother-reported conflict intensity was negligible. In contrast, in the Latina group, child respect at follow-up was significantly predictive of mother-reported conflict intensity ($\beta = -.76$, $t = -2.75$, $p < .05$), indicating that, as hypothesized, Latina mothers report higher conflict intensity when girls' respect is low. For African American families, child respect was not

a significant predictor; however, the direction of the association was consistent with our hypotheses. Possible reasons for this nonsignificant effect for African American families are addressed in the discussion section. In sum, the association between child respect and conflict intensity as reported by mothers was indeed moderated by ethnicity at the 3-year follow-up after accounting for prior conflict intensity.

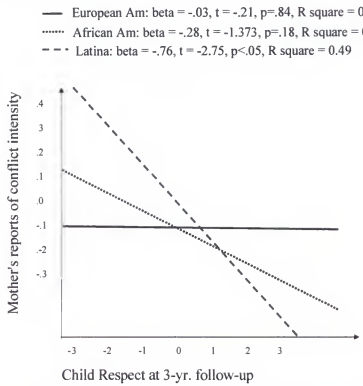

Figure 4-3. Partial regression lines for each ethnic group showing respect by ethnicity interaction (standardized scores)

Puberty. Two separate regression models were tested to address effects of pubertal timing on conflict and adjustment outcomes while controlling for demographic variables. Pubertal timing was dummy coded as early maturers = 1 versus others = 0. The first set of hierarchical regressions examined whether pubertal timing predicts any of the four conflict variables reported by mothers and daughters at follow-up. The second set of hierarchical regressions tested whether pubertal timing (early maturers versus

others) predicts adolescent adjustment assessments as reported by mothers and daughters at follow-up.

Initial results from the first set of analyses indicate that none of the models testing pubertal timing at baseline as a predictor was significant in predicting child-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .03$, $F(1, 86) = 2.69$, $p = .10$]; child-reported conflict intensity [$R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 86) = .43$, $p = .51$]; mother-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .04$, $F(1, 84) = 3.65$, $p = .06$]; or mother-reported conflict intensity frequency [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 84) = .22$, $p = .64$]. Thus, contrary to prediction, none of the conflict indicators were significantly predicted by pubertal timing at baseline after controlling for demographic variables. However, because these findings seem to be in direct contrast to existing literature and study expectations, further investigations concerning ethnicity as a possible moderator were conducted. To address this issue, a 2 X 2 MANCOVA was conducted. Results revealed a significant interaction effect for ethnicity (Wilks' Lambda $F = 2.16$, $p < .05$), indicating that the association between pubertal timing and conflict was indeed moderated by ethnicity. Follow-up univariate tests demonstrated a significant interaction effect between ethnicity and pubertal timing for child's report of conflict frequency, $F(2, 80) = 8.67$, $p < .01$ (Figure 4-4). For early-maturing girls, the simple main effect of ethnicity was significant, $F(2, 20) = 8.88$, $p < .01$, and the LSD post-hoc revealed that European American girls reported significantly higher conflict frequency scores than African American and Latina girls. The simple main effect of ethnicity for the "other" group was not significant, $F(2, 66) = 1.49$, $p = .23$. Thus, although the study hypothesis regarding direct effects of pubertal timing on conflict was not confirmed, a moderating effect of ethnicity was revealed.

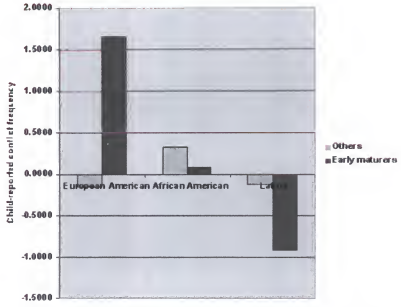

Figure 4-4. Pubertal timing and child-reported conflict frequency by ethnicity (standardized scores)

Results from the second set of analyses testing whether pubertal timing predicts adolescent adjustment as reported by mothers and daughters at follow-up indicate that again, none of the overall models were significant in predicting either child report on internalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 86) = .09$, $p = .77$] and externalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 86) = .17$, $p = .68$]; or mother reports on adolescent internalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 83) = .03$, $p = .86$] and externalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .04$, $F(1, 84) = .35$, $p = .56$]. Because ethnicity was found to moderate the association between pubertal timing and conflict, moderation effects were tested with regard to adolescent adjustment as well. MANCOVA results did not reveal a significant interaction with ethnicity (Wilks' Lambda $F = .82$, $p = .59$) in this case.

To test whether girl's pubertal status at baseline was associated with conflict or adjustment outcomes, a series of hierarchical regressions controlling for demographics were conducted to examine whether pubertal status at the follow-up period predicts

conflict or adjustment measured at follow-up. For analysis purposes, pubertal status was by dummy coded as pre-pubertal = 0; mid-pubertal = 1; and advanced-pubertal = 2, with the last group being omitted. Demographic variables were entered into step 1 and the dummy coded pubertal status variables were entered into step 2. The first set of four regressions examined pubertal status as a predictor variable for the separate conflict measures reported by mothers or daughters on frequency and intensity. The second set of hierarchical regressions investigated whether pubertal status predicts mother or daughter reports of adolescent adjustment.

Results from the first set of analyses indicate that pubertal status did not significantly predict child-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .03$, $F(2, 88) = 1.43$, $p = .25$] or intensity [$R^2 = .01$, $F(2, 88) = .43$, $p = .65$]. Similarly, pubertal status was not significantly predictive of mother-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .02$, $F(2, 87) = .76$, $p = .47$]. When predicting mother-reported conflict intensity, however, pubertal status explained an additional 5.6% of the variance [$R^2 = .06$, $F(2, 87) = 2.63$, $p = .07$] after controlling for the four demographic variables. Although this R^2 change was only marginally significant, examinations of individual beta coefficients of dummy-coded variables revealed a significant difference between the prepubertal group and the advanced pubertal group ($\beta = -.33$, $t = -2.23$, $p < .05$) when predicting mother-reported conflict intensity. Moreover, differences between the prepubertal group and the midpubertal group were also marginally significant ($\beta = -.28$, $t = -1.93$, $p = .057$) when predicting mother-reported conflict intensity. Means and standard deviations of mother-reported conflict intensity for the pre-, mid-, and advanced-pubertal groups are $M = .38$ and $SD = .35$, $M = .22$ and $SD = .26$, and $M = .18$ and $SD = .25$. Thus, contrary to prediction, results indicated that with the exception of mother-reported conflict intensity,

pubertal status (mid-puberty group in particular) did not significantly lead to higher conflict.

Results from the second set of analyses investigating whether pubertal status predicts mother or daughter reports of adolescent adjustment indicated that pubertal status did not significantly predict child-reported internalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .01$, $F(2, 87) = .49$, $p = .62$] or child-reported externalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .02$, $F(2, 87) = .98$, $p = .38$]. Similarly, when examining whether pubertal status predicts mother-reported adjustment outcomes, neither internalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .01$, $F(2, 86) = .42$, $p = .66$] nor externalizing behaviors [$R^2 = .01$, $F(2, 87) = .31$, $p = .73$] as reported by mothers were predicted.

Links Between Conflict and Adjustment

To address whether parent-child conflict during the late-childhood, preadolescent period predicts adjustment or behavioral problems during the early adolescent period, a series of multiple hierarchical regressions were conducted to examine whether any of the measures of conflict reported by mothers and daughters at baseline affect adolescent adjustment as also reported by mothers and daughters at follow-up. All conflict measures will be used as predictors for each separate adjustment measure (mother and daughter reports on internalizing and externalizing behaviors), thus yielding four separate multiple regression models. Because the simultaneous examination of all conflict variables as predictors likely results in multicolinearity issues (see Tables 4-1 and 4-2 for correlations), examinations of the individual betas are interpreted with caution. However, results from the overall model (R^2 for the overall model) provided adequate evidence to address the study question.

Results investigating whether conflict predicts child-reported internalizing or externalizing behaviors indicated that when predicting child-reported internalizing behaviors, demographics explained 3.0% of the variance and the 4 conflict indicators as measured at follow-up explained an additional 16.5% of the variance [$R^2 = .17$, $F(4, 91) = 4.67$, $p < .01$]. Particularly, child-reported conflict frequency ($\beta = .32$, $t = 2.89$, $p < .01$) emerged as the only significant predictor of child-reported internalizing behavior even after controlling for the demographics. Similarly, when predicting child-reported externalizing behaviors, demographics explained 4.7% of the variance and the four conflict indicators as measured at follow-up significantly explained an additional 23.6% of the variance [$R^2 = .236$, $F(4, 91) = 7.49$, $p < .001$]. Interestingly, child-reported conflict frequency ($\beta = .38$, $t = 3.65$, $p < .001$) again emerged as the significant predictor of externalizing behaviors as reported by daughters at follow-up even after controlling for demographic variables.

Results from the second set of analyses investigating whether conflict predicts mother-reported internalizing or externalizing behaviors indicated that in predicting internalizing behaviors reported by mothers at follow-up, demographic variables explained 2.5% of the variance and the 4 conflict indicators as measured at follow-up assessment explained an additional 13.5% of the variance [$R^2 = .14$, $F(4, 90) = 3.61$, $p < .01$]. In particular, child-reported conflict intensity ($\beta = .23$, $t = 2.17$, $p < .05$) and mother-reported conflict frequency ($\beta = .31$, $t = 2.59$, $p < .05$) emerged as significant predictors of internalizing behaviors reported by mothers at follow-up after controlling for demographic variables. Furthermore, in predicting externalizing behaviors reported by mothers at follow-up, the demographic variables explained 6.2% of the variance and

the 4 conflict indicators as measured at follow-up explained an additional 22.8% of the variance [$R^2 = .23$, $F(4, 91) = 7.29$, $p < .001$]. Specifically, mother-reported conflict frequency ($\beta = .39$, $t = 3.62$, $p < .001$) emerged as a significant predictor of children's externalizing behaviors at follow-up even after controlling for demographic variables. In sum, findings from these analyses suggest that, contrary to the hypothesis, there is an association between conflict at baseline assessments and internalizing and externalizing behaviors at follow-up. Specifically, when predicting child-reported adjustment, child-reported conflict frequency significantly predicted both internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Further, when predicting mother-reported adjustment, child-reported conflict intensity and mother-reported conflict frequency were predictive of internalizing behaviors reported by mothers and only mother-reported conflict frequency was predictive of externalizing behaviors reported by mothers.

Dyadic Interaction

To investigate whether relationship quality assessed at baseline is associated with assessments of parent-adolescent conflict or adolescent adjustment at follow-up, four hierarchical linear regressions were conducted to assess whether relationship quality at baseline predicts any of the four conflict measures (conflict frequency and intensity) reported by mothers and daughters at follow-up. An additional series of hierarchical regressions were conducted to test whether relationship quality at baseline affects either mother or daughter reports on adolescent adjustment (i.e., internalizing and externalizing behaviors) at follow-up.

Results from the first set of regressions indicate that contrary to what was expected, dyadic relationship quality at baseline did not significantly predict child-

reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 93) = .16$, $p = .69$] or intensity [$R^2 = .02$, $F(1, 93) = 1.92$, $p = .17$]; nor did it predict mother-reported conflict frequency [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 91) = .07$, $p = .80$] or intensity [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 91) = .39$, $p = .54$]. In sum, after controlling for demographic variables, the contribution of dyadic relationship quality at baseline to predicting any of the 4 conflict indicators reported by mothers and daughters was negligible.

When predicting adolescent adjustment outcomes at follow-up, neither child-reports of internalizing [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 92) = .14$, $p = .71$] nor externalizing [$R^2 = .02$, $F(1, 92) = 1.82$, $p = .18$] behaviors were predicted by relationship quality at baseline. Further, when predicting mother-reported internalizing behaviors at follow-up, demographic variables explained 3.9% of the variance and relationship quality at baseline explained an additional 4.5% of the variance in adjustment (internalizing) over time [$R^2 = .045$, $F(1, 87) = 4.31$, $p < .05$; $\beta = .22$, $t = 2.08$, $p < .05$]. None of predictors in the model was predictive of mother-reported externalizing behaviors over time [$R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 88) = .15$, $p = .69$]. Findings revealed that although the prediction was limited, dyadic relationship quality measured at baseline was significantly predictive of children's adjustment over time, as measured only by maternal reports of internalizing behaviors, after controlling for demographic variables.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present investigation brings to light many intriguing findings regarding parent-child relationships and how parent-child conflict specifically develops over a 3-year period within a diverse sample of girls and their mothers. The current study followed girls from the late-childhood, preadolescent period through the transition into early adolescence. Although an abundance of work has been conducted to examine parent-adolescent conflict, much of this work has been cross-sectional in nature, and has almost exclusively included children within the period of adolescence. The current investigation therefore expanded on current research by longitudinally examining a diverse sample of young girls and their mothers to assess whether conflict varies as a function of differing ethnic traditions such as respect for parental authority, differing aspects of pubertal development, and differing maternal parenting practices.

The present investigation uncovered many intriguing findings regarding maternal and child characteristics as they relate to the development of parent-child relationships and mother-daughter conflict in particular. First, the current study found that at least within the scope of this sample, conflict between mothers and their daughters did not increase as children moved from late-childhood to early-adolescence. Interestingly, the study further found that levels of both conflict frequency and intensity were strikingly similar across all three ethnic groups. Second, the issue of respect for parental authority was found to be differentially salient to mothers and daughters of differing ethnic

backgrounds. Levels of respect did not seem to change over time, but at both times, the association between mother-reported conflict intensity and respect was consistently moderated by ethnicity. Third, maternal characteristics and relationship quality varied by ethnicity. The current study found that although African American and Latina mothers in this sample were generally more restrictive and showed more disciplinary behaviors, mothers of all ethnic groups maintained similar levels of nurturance across both time points. Along the same lines, mothers' and daughters' relationship quality remained moderately positive across time for all ethnic groups. Although no ethnic group differences were found in the levels of relationship quality at baseline assessments, African American mothers and daughters had significantly lower relationship quality at follow-up when compared to the other two groups. Fourth, contrary to the commonly held belief that conflict increases at puberty, the present investigation found that neither girl's pubertal status nor girl's pubertal timing was significantly predictive of conflict. Intriguingly, findings suggest that the association between pubertal timing and conflict were moderated by ethnicity such that early maturing girls who were of European American decent reported significantly higher conflict frequency scores than African American and Latina early maturing girls. Finally, the current study found that there is an association between conflict during late-childhood and internalizing and externalizing behaviors during early adolescence. Specifically, childhood conflict frequency seems to be salient in assessing adolescent internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors for mothers and daughters in this study. These general findings are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Conflict

The current investigation pursued a long-standing line of research that has shown that increases in emotional tensions and minor conflict between parents and their children occur as children enter early adolescence. Age-related shifts in conflict have often been described in terms of the inverted U-shaped function, with conflict increasing at early adolescence with peaks during midpuberty (Montemayor, 1983; Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). Findings from the current study, however, do not support this body of literature. Results from the present investigation indicate that within this sample of girls and their mothers, conflict does not increase from the period of late-childhood to the period of early adolescence. In fact, both conflict frequency and intensity decreased slightly, although not significantly, from the period of late-childhood to early adolescence, with the exception of mother-reported conflict frequency, which increased as predicted. This increase, although consistent with existing literature and prediction, was not statistically significant. Findings from the current study conjure up what is seemingly an ongoing debate within the field of research concerning parent-adolescent conflict. Attempts at empirically answering the question of whether conflict with parents increases around the time that adolescents enter puberty have yielded mixed results (Montemayor, 1983). Two likely explanations have been offered, both of which can be applied to understanding the results of the present investigation in the context of the existing literature. One such explanation focuses on inconsistencies in methodologies and definitions used in studying conflict between parents and their children. The present study, for example uses the issues checklist, a commonly used measure (e.g., Fuligni, 1988; Hetherington & Clingempeel, 1992; Smetana, 1988), and has both mothers and daughters identify issues over which they have disagreements. The present study further asks mothers and

daughters to rate how frequently they experience conflict and how intense the conflict is with regard to each selected issue. Conversely, the most frequently cited studies involving increases in parent-adolescent conflict (Steinberg, 1981; Steinberg & Hill, 1978) used speech interruptions as the dependent measure. As Collins and Laursen (1992) note, when these studies are excluded, the findings that do remain do not support the common assumption that parent-child conflict peaks at the height of adolescent physical maturation. Moreover, studies, like the present investigation, that conduct longitudinal examinations of parent-child conflict with early adolescent participants revealed no associations between conflict and puberty. Thus, contrary to the generally accepted depiction of increased conflict at early adolescence, some research suggests that there are no consistent linear or curvilinear associations between pubertal maturation and rates of parent-child conflict (Laursen & Collins, 1994).

Another likely reason for inconsistent findings in this field is that children under 12 years of age have generally not been included in these investigations, thus making it difficult to assess the true rate of prepubescent conflict. Most research concerning parent-child conflict has included children immersed in adolescence; whereas the present investigation followed parent-child dyads from the time girls were in late-childhood until early adolescence thus yielding possibly different results. In sum, according to Laursen and Collins (1994), comparisons of research findings do not reveal clear evidence that the frequency and intensity of parent-adolescent conflict increase at early adolescence. Instead, individual differences in parent-child conflict may be tied to other factors such as pubertal timing which is discussed in later sections.

Respect

Because previous research has shown that there are significant ethnic group differences in the willingness of adolescents to engage in conflict with their parents (Fuligni, 1998), the current study pursued this line of research by longitudinally examining everyday disagreements between preadolescent girls and their mothers in a heterogeneous sample of African American, Latino, and European American families. Despite the fact that many researchers have acknowledged long-held cultural beliefs such as respect for parental authority as being important in their work, the issue of respect within families as an observed construct has rarely been examined empirically. As Harrison, Wilson, Pine, and Chan (1990) note, empirical studies have rarely been conducted to determine whether families indeed hold these values and whether these belief systems influence members' relationships with one another. Although some researchers have considered the concept of respect via qualities that parents want in their children (Harwood, Miller, & Luca Irizarry, 1995); patterns of parental independence giving (Bulcroft, Carmody, & Bulcroft, 1996); and attitudes toward competitiveness among ethnic minority families (Knight, Cota, & Bernal, 1993), the current investigation addresses the dearth of research on the construct of respect for parents and its effects on dyadic interactions in the context of mother-daughter conflict. This investigation is the first to developmentally examine the construct of respect and how such behaviors change over time. The current study operationalizes the construct by using observed behaviors during a conflict interaction between mothers and daughters. Specifically, daughters were scored on their listening behaviors including attending to their mothers when mothers were speaking, not interrupting mothers, and acknowledging mothers' comments (nodding or verbally affirming what mother has said) and their defiant behaviors

including disobeying mothers' requests, unwillingness to cooperate with mother, and ignoring mother during the interaction. Both sets of behaviors (i.e., listening and not being defiant) have been identified as components of respect for parental authority.

Group Differences

According to the results of the present investigation, girls' overall level of respect for parental authority did not significantly change over time within this sample. Further, findings indicated that there are significant ethnic group differences in the level of respect that children have for parental authority at both time points. African American and Latina girls showed significantly more respect toward parental authority than European American girls at baseline assessments, supporting the idea that within African-American and Latino families, pre-adolescent children follow a firm family hierarchical structure that places value on respect for parental authority and respect for elders. At follow-up assessment, however, Latina girls showed significantly more respect than African American and European American girls at the 3-year follow-up. This finding leads to several further considerations. First, is there something unique about African American girls that leads to this difference in respect as they mature when compared to the other two ethnic groups? Second, could it simply be the case that Latinas' level of respect increases and European American girls' level also go up slightly so the African Americans are closer to the European Americans than they previously were, but in absolute level African Americans do not change? Finally, because there has been a dearth of research developmentally examining the construct of respect as children develop, it is difficult to ascertain expectations with regard to group differences. Perhaps African American girls should show an increase in respect the way that Latina

girls do. More research on the developmental expectations and changes in this construct are clearly needed.

Associations with Conflict

The current study wanted to further investigate whether associations between respect and conflict were moderated by ethnicity. Results indicate that like findings at baseline assessment where moderating effects of ethnicity on the association between child respect and mother's report of conflict intensity were found, current findings also reveal a moderation effect. Similar to initial results, follow-up analyses revealed that for European American families, the relationship between child respect at follow-up and mother-reported conflict intensity is negligible. In contrast, the Latina group revealed that child respect at follow-up was significantly predictive of mother-reported conflict intensity, indicating that, as hypothesized, Latina mothers report higher conflict intensity when girls' respect was low. Moreover, the current investigation found that although ethnic group differences were found in levels of respect, conflict did not vary by ethnicity at either time point. This research supports previous findings, such as those of Fuligni (1998), that suggest that despite holding different beliefs about respect for parental authority and individual autonomy, adolescents from various ethnic backgrounds reported strikingly similar amounts of conflict with their mothers. Another interesting point to make regarding Latina mothers and daughters specifically is reports of conflict for these dyads decreased over time, but respect has increased. Thus, it is certainly plausible that there is a dynamic process that is emerging but was not fully tapped in the present investigation. Unlike initial results however, follow-up assessments indicate that child respect was not a significant predictor for conflict in African American families during early adolescence; however, the direction of the association was consistent with

hypotheses. One possible explanation for this particular finding could be that there could be more variation within African American families regarding beliefs about respect than among the Latina group enrolled in this study. Because there was no independent measure of such beliefs, this reasoning can not be fully assessed. However, this line of reasoning certainly merits future investigation.

Maternal Behaviors

In addition to ethnic group differences regarding respect for authority, the present investigation also longitudinally examined group differences in mothers' restrictive, disciplinary practices, mother's nurturance, and maternal communication during both the late-childhood, preadolescent period and the early adolescent period. Results indicate that African American and Latina mothers placed more emphasis on restrictive, disciplinary behaviors than did European American mothers during late childhood and that African American mothers were the only group who continued to emphasize such restrictive behaviors at early adolescence. Interestingly, no ethnic group differences were found for self-reported maternal nurturance. Nor were there differences in nurturance levels over time. Thus, although ethnic differences exist in restrictive, disciplinary behaviors with mothers in this sample, nurturance levels remain moderately high both across ethnicities and across time. Group differences were also found on maternal communication during early adolescence, with European American and Latina mothers demonstrating more competent communication practices than African American mothers. Thus, results from the present investigation also indicate that at least for mothers in this sample, maternal behaviors on the whole did not significantly change from the time that their daughters are in the late-childhood period to the time that they are in early adolescence.

Maternal Behaviors During Late-childhood

Findings concerning the late-childhood/pre-adolescent period, along with the finding that indicate no group differences in maternal report of nurturance at either time point, suggest that although mothers from different ethnic backgrounds may vary in levels of restrictiveness during late-childhood, nurturance is moderately high across different ethnicities. Parents who emphasize restrictive behaviors have traditionally been categorized in the authoritarian parenting style (Baumrind, 1972), with their children displaying fearful, timid, and conforming behaviors. According to Darling and Steinberg (1993), however, parenting style is best understood as a context within which socialization occurs, rather than as a socialization practice itself. This line of research focuses on parenting practices (behaviors) exhibited in different contexts, rather than parenting style as the dimension that can affect children's development. It is theoretically possible that certain behaviors, such as restrictive or disciplinary behaviors, can be detrimental in one context but adaptive in another. This reasoning would explain why authoritarian-type behaviors such as restrictiveness in certain families would not have negative, detrimental outcomes as they are exhibited in the context of maternal nurturance. The restrictive behaviors in these cultural contexts have proven, for these families, to be a useful, adaptive tool to successfully raise children in the cultural traditions that are expected of them. Conversely, this explanation could also account for why authoritative-type behaviors have been shown to be effective for European American children and not as effective with children from other ethnic or cultural backgrounds (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). As participants in this study may have shown, restrictive behaviors coupled with nurturance during the late-childhood period may be viewed as less harsh, and more authoritative-like.

Maternal Behaviors During Early-adolescence

Findings concerning maternal behaviors during early-adolescence suggest that African American mothers, in comparison to Latina and European American mothers, remain more restrictive as their daughters get older but tend to show lower communication skills as daughters enter early adolescence. In addition to the possible explanations already discussed regarding restrictive parenting practices, this finding supports research that has shown that African American mothers struggle and are at times confused with how to both support their daughters' desire for autonomy and keep them safe as they get older (Cauce et al., 1996). African American mothers of early adolescent girls have reported the need to keep a close watch on their daughters and the need to enforce strict rules for the safety of their children (Cauce et al., 1996). It is the very act of being restrictive that may lead to less communication, as mothers of these girls may feel that there is no room for discussion and explanation; rather, daughters are to listen and follow rules when being addressed by their mothers. Conversely, as girls enter early adolescence, Latina mothers in this sample tended to become less restrictive and more communicative with their daughters. This finding supports previous research that indicates that Latino parents have been shown to display a more relaxed and egalitarian style (Garcia-Coll et al., 1995; McDermott, 2000) when compared to other groups.

Associations with Conflict

Findings from the current investigation indicate that neither maternal restrictiveness, nurturance, nor communication at initial assessment was a significant predictor of conflict frequency or intensity as reported by mothers and daughters during the early adolescent period. Thus, although some families may experience more restrictive, disciplinary techniques or higher communication levels, subsequent levels of

conflict reported by mothers and daughters were not affected, as indicated in the similarity of conflict levels reported by different ethnic groups.

Puberty

Based on prior research that suggests that parent-adolescent relationship, and parent-adolescent conflict in particular changes as children enter puberty, the current investigation examined two aspects of puberty: pubertal status (i.e., early, mid, advanced) and pubertal timing (early vs. others). The following sections will address the findings within each of these aspects.

Pubertal Status Associations with Conflict

Because age-related shifts in conflict have been described as an inverted U-shaped function, with rates peaking at the apex of puberty in early to midadolescence, expectations were that conflict would be most frequent and most intense during early to midpuberty. Findings from the present investigation indicate that contrary to prediction, girl's pubertal status was not significantly predictive of child-reported conflict frequency or intensity. Similarly, pubertal status did not significantly affect mother-reported conflict frequency. When considering mother-reported conflict intensity, however, there was a trend ($p < .07$) for the prepubertal group to score higher than the mid- and advanced-pubertal groups, suggesting that mothers in this sample reported higher conflict intensity with their daughters even before they had begun puberty. As expected, mothers of girls in the advanced pubertal group reported the least intense conflicts. These findings are in contrast to previous theories. It should be noted that although the findings represent a small effect, they merit further investigation especially given the dearth of research to support the commonly held belief that conflict increases at puberty and peaks at mid puberty.

Pubertal Timing Associations with Conflict

Initial results indicating that pubertal timing had no significant effect on parent-adolescent conflict was surprising and somewhat puzzling, given that a well documented and often cited body of literature exists showing that pubertal timing does indeed affect parent-child relationships and conflict, in particular (Steinberg, 1987). However, much of this research focused on European American families and did not include or test whether effects were comparable across ethnic groups. At the same time, it has consistently been shown that African American girls tend to begin puberty significantly earlier than their European American counterparts (Herman-Giddens et al, 1997). In the present investigation, moderation effects of ethnicity were tested. Findings suggested that the association between pubertal timing and conflict were, at least for this sample, moderated by ethnicity such that early maturing girls who were of European American decent reported significantly higher conflict frequency scores than African American and Latina early maturing girls. Therefore, early maturation status does indeed seem to have a somewhat negative impact on conflict, as assessed by child-reported conflict frequency, but only for European American girls. Intriguingly, for African American and especially Latina girls, early maturing status seems to act as a mechanism by which they report less conflict frequency with their mothers. Because a dearth of research exists involving minority mothers and daughters in the context of parent-child conflict, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusion. It could very well be the case that pubertal timing plays a different role in ethnic minority families. As such, further research is needed to uncover the reasons why this could be happening.

Status and Timing Associations with Adolescent Adjustment

Similar to findings concerning pubertal status and conflict, analyses examining whether pubertal status was predictive of mother or daughter reports of adolescent adjustment indicated that pubertal status was not a significant predictor of adjustment. Because this research question was somewhat exploratory in nature, future investigations should consider possible mediating and/or moderating variables in the association between pubertal status and adolescent adjustment.

Also, as was the case with conflict, findings concerning pubertal timing showed no significant effect on either mother or daughter reported adjustment. Again, moderation effects were tested with no significance. Thus, the expectation that early maturing girls would have poorer adjustment outcomes compared to other girls was not demonstrated in the present study. It should be noted that most of the studies involving pubertal timing have examined the issue in older samples, suggesting that effects seem to emerge over time. Further, as Brooks-Gunn (1984) has noted, initial pubertal changes are responded to positively by early-maturing girls, and it is only over time that problems emerge. Thus, because previous research has shown that problems emerge in mid adolescence, the present sample may be unique or may not be old enough to have reached the point at which problems begin.

Links Between Conflict and Adjustment

Results from the present investigation examining whether parent-child conflict during the late-childhood, preadolescent period predicts adjustment or behavioral problems as reported by mothers and daughters later in early adolescence suggest that interestingly, there is an association between conflict during late-childhood and adolescent internalizing and externalizing behaviors during early adolescence.

Specifically, when predicting child-reported adjustment, child-reported conflict frequency significantly predicted both internalizing and externalizing behaviors, suggesting that the frequency of conflict is what adolescent girls in this study find to be salient in their adjustment outcomes. Moreover, child-reports on conflict intensity also seem to be salient in predicting mother-report of girls' internalizing behaviors. Intriguingly, mother-reported conflict frequency predicted both internalizing and externalizing behaviors as assessed by mothers, again suggesting that it is the frequency of the conflict that is most closely associated with adolescent adjustment outcomes. Some research has suggested that although parent-adolescent conflict may be frequent, it is generally not accompanied by negative outcomes. Conversely, other research (Leaper, Hauser, Kremen, & Powers, 1989; Rueter, Scaramella, Wallace, & Conger, 1999) has shown that there can be negative outcomes for adolescents, particularly when conflicts are intense and prolonged. Moreover, it is generally thought that conflict is not much of an issue for adolescent adjustment except for the small percentage of youth who experience sustained conflict. In this case, families with more conflict prior to adolescent may be those who are likely to maintain high levels of conflict and have girls with more problems. Thus, it has been suggested that preexisting problems set children on the course for difficulties during adolescence and family conflict may be one of those conditions (Graber, 2004; Graber & Brooks-Gunn, 1996). Findings from the current investigation support this latter body of literature, showing that conflict frequency, in particular, seems to be salient in assessing adolescent internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors.

Dyadic Interaction

The current study also examined possible associations between dyadic relationship quality and conflict, and similarly, relationship quality and adolescent adjustment. Although it was somewhat exploratory in nature, the expectation was that relationship quality would be negatively associated with conflict over time, such that the better the quality of the relationship during pre-adolescence, the less conflict during early adolescence. These expectations were not realized in the current sample. Reasons for these findings include the possibility that because assessments of relationship quality are based on the judgment of an outside observer, it is difficult to comprehensively define mothers' and daughters' relationship quality by observation without including each person's perception of the relationship. Moreover, the scale used in this study is meant to tap the general quality of the relationship within the observed interaction and does not speak to quality overall. In order to assess the dyad's relationship quality more precisely, more measures (perhaps both observed and self-report) could be employed, possibly yielding different results.

When examining the association between relationship quality and mothers' and daughters' reports of adolescent adjustment outcomes, only maternal reports of internalizing problem behaviors were predicted by relationship quality during preadolescence. Thus, it could be the case that mothers monitor their relationships with their daughters and use them as a gauge to make assessments regarding their daughter's internal feelings and emotions. In sum, because examinations of dyadic relationship quality and its effects on parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent adjustment were exploratory in nature, future investigations would benefit from pursuing this line of research, in cases where both observed and self-report measures are used.

Limitations

This study provided valuable information regarding issues among families characterized as having different cultural traditions. There are, however, several limitations that should be considered. First, given that this is a selective sample of certain communities in the New York City area, the findings may not apply to groups of mothers and daughters in other contexts. Second, because of limitations due to sample size, it was difficult to separate the sample into more specific subgroups. For example, separating Puerto Rican, Mexican, or Dominican participants into distinct subgroups could yield clearer, if not different, results. The sample also included individuals who identified themselves as Caribbean Black, African American, or Black; unique cultural traditions may exist within different subgroups of Black Americans that may account for some variations in findings for respect or restrictive practices over time. Third, the issue of respect, although discussed qualitatively in research, has not been extensively investigated empirically. Because little work has been done in this area, a measure of respect had to be created for this study. In addition to observed measures, like the one used in the present study, the development of self-report measures of respect and comparisons across methodologies seem warranted given the conceptual importance of the construct to family relationships. Therefore, to further advance research in this area, both observations and self-reports on familial respect would prove to be of great heuristic value. Finally, because the current investigation is limited to mothers and daughters specifically, it would be both interesting and beneficial to see how each of these constructs might develop or differ in studies involving boys.

Conclusions

Despite an increasing emphasis on the inclusion of more ethnically diverse samples, researchers continue to note that most previous research involving parents and their adolescents, upon which many conclusions are based, has been conducted using European American, middle-class samples. The current investigation examined a diverse sample of young girls and their mothers both during preadolescence and early adolescence and uncovered some interesting and noteworthy findings. Most centrally, the current study emphasized the salience of respect for parental authority within ethnic minority families and how this salience persists even as girls mature into early adolescence. Further, the present investigation brings into question what actually occurs during the entry into puberty. Although previous research has portrayed early adolescence as a time plagued by increased conflict and defiance, the current study showed that this is not necessarily the case. Girls and mothers in the current sample showed no such increase in conflict frequency or intensity. Moreover, this study found that although African American and Latina mothers in this sample were generally more restrictive and showed more disciplinary behaviors, mothers of all ethnic groups maintained similar levels of nurturance across both time points. By the same token, mothers' and daughters' relationship quality remained moderately positive across time for all ethnic groups. Finally, the present investigation found that there is an association between conflict during late-childhood and adolescent internalizing and externalizing behaviors during early adolescence. Specifically, conflict frequency seems to be salient in assessing adolescent internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors for mothers and daughters in this study.

In sum, the current investigation brought to light many important points concerning the development of mother-daughter relationships as girls enter puberty, as well as cultural differences and the role ethnicity plays with respect to mothers and daughters in conflict. These findings support the notion that the parent-child relationship does not have to be defined by conflict, defiance, and strife as children enter puberty. Moreover, these findings also suggest that being a part of a specific group and following the cultural norms and expectations of that group could set young girls and their mothers on specific and sometimes differential behavioral trajectories. Finally, these findings suggest that frequent conflict may indeed have long-term consequences for adolescents' internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Further research is certainly warranted in this well-documented, yet clearly divisive field of study.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Sara Villanueva-Abraham was born on September 21, 1966, in Austin, Texas, to Manuel and Rosita Villanueva. She has three brothers: Leon, Manuel, and Ramiro. The Villanueva children were raised in a warm, supportive home where money and material things were scarce, but love and faith were aplenty. Sara attended Johnston High School at a time when mandatory busing was being implemented. Johnston was known to be one of the poorest schools in the school district; thus there was much controversy over the more privileged kids having to attend school in the "East Side" of town where only Mexicans and Blacks lived. However, having grown up in the neighborhood, Sara was never aware of the material and academic resources that were never made available at her school, such as computer labs or band halls; after all, people do not tend to miss what they never had.

After graduating high school, Sara went on to attend the University of Texas at Austin where she attained a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in psychology and a minor in English literature. She was the first in her family to attend college. She worked for 5 years as an at-risk counselor for the Austin Independent School District, working with underprivileged adolescents who were at risk for drug-usage, pregnancy, drop-out, and gang affiliations. She then decided to take a leave to devote more time to her three children: Susan, Thomas, and Sophia.

After a 4-year sabbatical, Sara decided it was time to pursue her continued interest in academics. She applied and was accepted into the developmental psychology graduate program at the University of Florida, where she has developed and refined her skills as an academician and researcher. Her research interests include cultural differences in parent-adolescent conflict and adolescent social development. Sara received her Master of Science degree in developmental psychology from the University of Florida in 2003. Hard work and determination finally paid off when Sara ultimately received her Doctor of Philosophy degree in developmental psychology from the University of Florida in 2004. Perhaps her continual pursuit of education and insatiable thirst for knowledge will encourage other children from similar backgrounds to work hard and invest in their future through higher education.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Julia A. Graber, Chair
Associate Professor of Psychology

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Scott A. Miller
Professor of Psychology

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Lise M. Youngblade
Assistant Professor of Psychology

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Mark R. Fondacaro
Associate Professor of Psychology

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Constance L. Shehan
Professor of Sociology

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Dean, Graduate School